THE NARRATIVES OF THE RESURRECTION

GARDNER SMITH

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THE NARRATIVES OF THE RESURRECTION

THE NARRATIVES OF THE RESURRECTION

A CRITICAL STUDY

BY

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TO

MY FATHER

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FOREWORD

THIS book contains many references to Professor Kirsopp Lake's work, *The Historical Evidence for the Resurrection of Jesus Christ*, and it is only right that I should acknowledge how much I owe to the author. I do not always agree with Professor Lake's conclusions, but I feel convinced that his method of study is the only one which can profitably be followed. It was the reading of his book some years ago which first aroused my interest in the critical problems involved in the Narratives of the Resurrection.

P. G.-S.

INTRODUCTION

THE following pages represent an attempt to re-examine frankly and at length the available evidence for the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

The field has been well covered in many previous works, but few would suggest that on a matter so difficult and so important the last word had been said. In the last ten or fifteen years the stream of literature in this country has shown a tendency to dry up, and perhaps there is now room for a further study of the problem. No new and startling discoveries have been made, but some progress has been made in the study of those sources of information which have long been available, and it is my hope that in the matter of the resurrection the present work may make some suggestions as to the interrelations of the gospels which will help to the correct evaluation of their testimony.

Before we approach the main subject of our enquiry it may be as well to consider briefly the position of the belief in the resurrection in the theology of the Church.

None will deny that in the early days the resurrection held a central place in Christian teaching. It is surprising that we know so much of the beliefs of the first generation of the followers of Jesus. When

we consider how little is known of the succeeding period and how scanty are the literary remains of the second century, it is a matter no less for astonishment than for gratification that the works of the apostles and of their immediate associates fill so large a volume as the New Testament. There we have no less than thirteen letters of St. Paul, four accounts of the earthly ministry of Jesus which, though not wholly independent, are by no means mere repetitions of one another, the invaluable history of the early Church contained in Acts, and sundry other documents which, though of uncertain authorship and date, yet serve to illustrate the rich variety of early Christian theology.

In most of these books the resurrection is specifically mentioned, and of the rest it may be said that a recognition of the fact is fundamental to the position of the authors. Indeed it is superfluous to remark that the whole of the New Testament is founded upon a belief in the resurrection. Acts makes it clear that the assertion of the fact was the main point of the earliest Christian preaching, and apart from a belief in the event the first missionaries of the gospel would never have preached at all. It was the resurrection which was held to justify belief in the supernatural claims of Jesus, and it was the resurrection which provided the assurance of redemption no less than the hope of immortality. 'If Christ be not raised from the dead then is our preaching vain and your faith also is vain.' It may be convenient to collect a few of the more striking

passages in order to give a clear idea of the use made of the belief in the resurrection by the early preachers and teachers of the Church.

Taking Acts first, we must remember that the primary object of the sermons and speeches addressed to Jewish listeners was to prove that Jesus was the promised Messiah. Thus St. Peter concluded his first sermon as recorded in Acts ii, 'Let all the house of Israel therefore know assuredly that God hath made him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom ye crucified' (ii. 36). Saul, after his conversion 'confounded the Jews which dwelt at Damascus, proving that this is the Christ' (ix. 22). In his sermon years afterwards at Antioch he had no other object than to prove that in Jesus the promise made unto the fathers had been fulfilled (xiii. 33). Whatever estimate we may form of the accuracy with which the author of Acts records these speeches, we have no reason to doubt that this was the substance of early Christian preaching. It was not an easy contention to establish, for the Jews were little likely to identify a crucified prophet with their expected national deliverer, and the Gentiles had no sympathy with messianic expectation. The Christian preachers had two lines of argument. Firstly, they contended that the crucifixion was in accordance with the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, and secondly, that the messiahship of Jesus had been vindicated by the resurrection.

As to the first contention, we cannot say when the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah first took its place in

Christian apologetic, but we may be sure that it was not long before its appropriateness suggested itself to men well versed in the text of the Jewish scriptures.[1] By further study many anticipations of the death of the Christ were discovered, so that the author of Acts can represent St. Peter as declaring 'The things which God foreshewed by the mouth of all the prophets, that his Christ should suffer, he thus fulfilled' (iii. 18). By itself this contention might not have carried conviction, for with the current methods of interpretation anything could be proved from scripture; but reinforced by the powerful argument from the resurrection it could not fail to carry weight. That was the fact on which the apostles based their argument. They could speak from experience, which will always convince more readily than reasoning alone. 'With great power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus' (iv. 33). The account of St. Paul's preaching at Thessalonica is a good summary of the early gospel, 'For three sabbath days he reasoned with them from the scriptures, opening and alleging that it behoved the Christ to suffer, and to rise again from the dead; and that this Jesus, whom I proclaim unto you is the Christ' (xvii. 3). St. Paul's method of dealing with the Gentiles was not essentially different; at Athens 'he preached Jesus and the resurrection' (xvii. 18), and even before Agrippa his theme was the same. 'WHY is it judged incredible with you if God doth raise the dead?' (xxvi. 8).

[1] See Rashdall, *The Idea of Atonement*, p. 79 f.

The resurrection, therefore, was the most powerful argument which the apostles could adduce in support of their belief that Jesus was the Christ. But it was more. It had its place in the scheme of things which it was their happy task to proclaim. Not only did they assert the messiahship of Jesus, but they declared his present exaltation and announced his future supremacy. To both these conceptions a belief in the resurrection was vital. The pouring forth of the Spirit was proof conclusive of the exaltation of Jesus by whose mediation the Spirit came.[1] To quote once more Peter's first discourse. 'This Jesus did God raise up, whereof we are all witnesses. Being therefore by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath poured forth this which ye see and hear' (ii. 32 f.). In the next chapter Peter, after proclaiming the resurrection, exhorts his hearers to repentance as a preliminary to the final consummation, 'That he may send the Christ, who hath been appointed for you, even Jesus: whom the heaven must receive until the times of restoration of all things' (iii. 20 f., cf. v. 30). A belief in the resurrection is obviously implied in the thought of the exaltation of Christ; without that there could have been no vision for Stephen, and it is in close connection with the resurrection that St. Paul announces to the Athenians the certainty of coming

[1] There was much vagueness as to the personality of the Spirit of Jesus (Phil. i. 19; Gal. iv. 6), and St. Paul could say 'the Lord is the Spirit' (2 Cor. iii. 17).

judgment 'He hath appointed a day in which he will judge the world in righteousness by the man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men in that he hath raised him from the dead' (xvii. 31).

An examination of the Epistles confirms the impression gained from Acts of the central place which the resurrection had in the earliest Christian theology, although the letters of St. Paul, being addressed to men already converted, naturally cover a far wider field than the brief apologies of Acts. The resurrection is still the great vindication of Christ, a main support of the Pauline Christology. Thus, in the opening passage of the Epistle to the Romans, we read of Jesus Christ that 'he was declared to be the Son of God with power according to the spirit of holiness by the resurrection of the dead.' If we knew more of St. Paul's methods of addressing the unconverted, we should no doubt find this argument frequently set forth, but writing to his converts he naturally dwells on other aspects of the gospel of the resurrection. Particularly does he insist on the assurance of individual immortality which the resurrection of Christ provides. 'He that raised from the dead Christ Jesus shall quicken your mortal bodies through his indwelling spirit with you' (Rom. viii. 11). The argument is fully developed in 1 Cor. xv. The assurance of a future resurrection of the faithful is dependent upon the historical fact of the resurrection of Christ. 'If Christ hath not been raised your faith is vain, ye are yet in your sins: then, too,

they that are fallen asleep in Christ are perished. If only in this life we have set our hope in Christ we are of all men most miserable. But now Christ hath been raised from the dead, the first-fruits of them that are fallen asleep' (1 Cor. xv. 17 ff.).

To St. Paul the resurrection of Christ was far more than an isolated event, it was a fact of cosmic significance, comparable only with the universal fall in Adam. 'For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. But each in his own order: Christ the first-fruits, then they that are Christ's at his coming: then the end when he shall deliver up the kingdom to God the Father' (xv. 23–24). There is, at least in this passage, no thought of a resurrection of the wicked. It is Christ's own people that will rise, and the power that will raise them will be Christ's Spirit dwelling within them (Rom. viii. 11). Yet death itself will be destroyed, the last enemy that God has put under his feet (1 Cor. xv. 26).

We have here one aspect of St. Paul's mystical doctrine of the unity of Christ with his people which in other passages he applies not to the physical resurrection in the future, but to the moral and spiritual resurrection in the present. Thus in the sixth chapter of the Epistle to the Romans he writes, 'What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? God forbid! Being such as are dead to sin how shall we yet live in it? Or are ye ignorant that as many as were baptized into Christ we were baptized into his death? So we were buried with him through baptism unto death

in order that as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, so we too may walk in newness of life' (Rom. vi. 1–4). In the Epistle to the Colossians the thought receives fuller development. Christ is termed the first-born from the dead (i. 18). 'Ye were buried with him in the baptism, in which also ye were raised together through the faith of the working of God who raised him from the dead' (ii. 12). The new life began then. 'And you being dead in your sins and in the uncircumcision of your flesh he made alive together with him' (ii. 13). So St. Paul leads up to the great appeal which the Church reads as the Epistle for Easter Day: 'If then ye rose together with Christ, seek those things which areabove, where is Christ seated at the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth, for ye died and your life has been hidden with Christ in God' (iii. 1 ff.). This may be said to represent the latest phase of St. Paul's thought on the resurrection, and the passage quoted may be compared with Eph. ii. 4 ff.—'God being rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead through our trespasses quickened us together with Christ (by grace have ye been saved) and raised us up with him, and made us to sit with him in the heavenly sphere in Christ Jesus.' There is no reason to suppose that St. Paul had abandoned his earlier view of the evidential value of the resurrection. In the same epistle he refers to 'the exceeding greatness of God's power to us-ward who believe, according to that working of the strength

of his might when he raised him from the dead, and made him to sit at his right hand in the heavenly sphere' (i. 19 f.). But now the mystical thought occupies a larger place in his mind; there is a sense in which the resurrection of Christ's followers is past already, inasmuch as they have been raised with Christ through baptism to a new and higher life. They no longer belong to the old world with its living death of sin, they share in that exaltation of their Master of which his resurrection was the outward sign, and with him they dwell in the heavenly sphere.

It is interesting to note that a few rationalizers took this view of the resurrection of believers to exclude the faith in a future resurrection of the body. 'Shun profane babblings, for they will proceed farther in ungodliness, and their word will spread as doth a gangrene: of whom is Hymenæus and Philetus inasmuch as they have erred concerning the truth saying that the resurrection hath already taken place, and they overthrow the faith of some' (2 Tim. ii. 16 ff., cf. 1 Cor. xv. 12). Considering the intensely eschatological tone of early Christianity, it is not likely that Hymenæus and Philetus had many followers, or indeed that the Pauline thought of a spiritual resurrection would compete seriously with the popular view. Popular Christianity is much more likely to be represented in the watchword quoted a few verses above, 'Faithful is the saying: For if we died with him, we shall also live with him' (ii. 11). That was the hope which supported the early Church, and it has left its mark deep upon the New Testament. In the Apocalypse

it inspires the great vision of the risen Christ with which the book opens: 'I am the First and the Last, and He that liveth—and I was dead and behold I am alive for ever and ever—and I have the keys of Death and of Hades' (Rev. i. 17 f.).

Many other passages might be quoted, but these will suffice to illustrate the central position of the resurrection in the thought of the early Church. It vindicated the claims of Christ to be the promised Messiah and the Son of God; it illustrated the overwhelming power of God who brought again from the dead that great Shepherd of the sheep; it blended with the idea of the exaltation of Christ to the right hand of God to justify the worship offered to Christ and the Christology on which it rested; and last but not least it provided the assurance of the future resurrection of them that are Christ's at his appearing. St. Paul's further use of the resurrection of the body as typifying the resurrection of the soul lent itself more readily than some of the Apostle's mystical doctrines to expression in ritual form, and left its mark on the baptismal forms of later times.

In some of the books of the New Testament, the resurrection is not specifically mentioned because the thought of Christ's rising from the dead has been merged in that of his exaltation to Heaven, but a belief in the historical fact is certainly implied. St. John only has less need of any such idea—for him the Christ is the 'eternal Son whom the Father hath sent to be the Saviour of the world'; pre-existent and wholly Divine, the Son needs no vindication

from a miraculous resurrection, 'The witness is this, that God gave unto us eternal life, and this life is in his Son' (1 John v. 11). St. John believed in the physical resurrection, and used the term 'believe' absolutely of acceptance of the fact of the empty tomb, but throughout his gospel he displays interest in eternal truth rather than in the mere happenings of history.

In all subsequent ages the Church has kept its belief in the resurrection in the very centre of its theology. Easter was the first great Christian festival and it has retained its supremacy. Many elements of early Christian theology have fallen into the background amid changing circumstances and changing needs, but the belief that Jesus was raised from the dead has remained, and still remains, the central dogma of all branches of the Church. Deductions from it are somewhat differently expressed, but in the minds of most believers the resurrection is still, as it was to St. Peter and St. Paul, the vindication of the truth of the claims of Jesus, the proof that Death has been dethroned, and the guarantee that for Christ's followers there is laid up a crown of glory. Truly we tread on holy ground.

It is the purpose of the present work to re-examine the evidence for the belief that Jesus rose from the dead. There are really two questions. What evidence had the early Christians for believing in the resurrection? and, What evidence have we? The first question is purely historical, the second involves the weighing

of probabilities and the passing of judgment. It is important that we should not confuse them, although they are obviously interconnected.

The evidence which satisfied a Christian of the first or second generation may not carry conviction with the critical enquirer of to-day, who may suggest a different interpretation of the facts. To some extent the converse is true. Facts and arguments which seem to us of great importance would in many cases have seemed to our spiritual ancestors trivial if not irrelevant. The difficulty of the whole discussion is due to the change in outlook which nineteen centuries have produced. The modern enquirer has developed an historical sense, an endowment almost unknown in the first century. Canons of criticism have been established which would have appeared unnecessary and vexatious to the authors of the gospels. And, above all, the student of to-day tries, as his remote predecessors did not try, to approach historical problems with a mind freed from dogmatic prejudices and unbiassed by antecedent assumptions. The contrast between the spirit of our enquiry and that of the authors of the New Testament is very great, and the difficulty involved in the use by one age of evidence collected by another is serious indeed.

And yet it must not be exaggerated. Facts are facts in all ages, and, widely as the appreciation of the laws of evidence may vary from age to age, those laws in themselves are of eternal validity. The writers of the first century may have been uncritical

in their methods—although their incompetence may be exaggerated—but on the whole they seem to have made a wise selection from the material at their disposal, and a considerable proportion of the facts they record can only be challenged by an incredulity as irrational as the credulity with which the writers are charged. The historical narratives of the New Testament would not have served the Church for so many centuries unless their use had been justified by their own intrinsic merits. Recent generations have become aware of their shortcomings, but there is no need to allow the reaction from the old mechanical views to carry us to the opposite extreme. Men like the author of the Acts are not to be despised even by the modern historian, and although he may at times have misjudged the value of his sources or been influenced unduly by his own theological ideas, there is *prima facie* a strong probability that such a man gives us a substantially correct account of the events which he sets out to record. The *onus probandi* is upon those who would impugn the value of his testimony.

With regard to the narratives of the resurrection it must be admitted that, with the possible exception of St. Paul, we have no witness who can testify at first hand to what he has seen and heard. The author of the first gospel is a mystery, but it is most improbable that the Apostle Matthew had any hand in the compilation of the account of the resurrection. The second gospel was probably written by John Mark, the companion of St. Paul, but its testimony

as to the resurrection is defective owing to the loss of the last chapter, and in what remains there is no indication that the author was a witness of what he records. St. Luke makes no other claim than to have collected reliable evidence from those in a position to supply it; there is no suggestion that he saw the empty tomb or the risen Christ. In the fourth gospel, if the traditional belief as to its authorship be accepted, we have testimony at first hand; but there are so many arguments against the traditional view and so many scholars are unable to accept it that it would be hazardous in the extreme to claim the authority of John the son of Zebedee for the narrative which this gospel contains. In a later chapter we shall have to examine in detail the account of 'St. John,' it may then appear whether in itself it suggests a first-hand knowledge of the events described. There remain only the witness of St. Paul, and of St. Peter in the speeches recorded in Acts. The speeches contain no details, and at the most testify only to be belief of the earliest Church that Jesus had risen from the dead. Outside the New Testament witnesses are few, though they are not without importance.

These are our materials for judging the evidence on which the first Christians founded their faith. The greater part of this book is concerned with a critical examination of these documents in an endeavour to discover how the Church's belief came into being and how in course of time it was developed. On the further question of the value of the evidence

as affecting our own beliefs a good deal will be said incidentally, and in the last chapter a tentative reconstruction of the facts will be attempted. Here a few preliminary remarks may not be out of place, and it may be well to consider what kind of conclusion we may hope to reach.

Positive proof of any distant event is intrinsically impossible. Even the earliest witnesses of the resurrection did not succeed in convincing more than a small proportion of their hearers, and they who spoke from their own experience and from the experience of their immediate acquaintances were in a far stronger position than we who can only catch distant echoes of their words. The evidence on which we must rely is in the main the same as that set forth by Peter and Paul at Jerusalem and Athens, they are the same witnesses whom we must quote, the same arguments that we must elaborate. But evidence does not improve with age, and we are manifestly in a weaker position than they. If the Apostles failed to compel assent by the marshalling of evidence, we, their distant descendants, cannot hope to succeed. All historical questions are problems of probability, sometimes that probability may be great, sometimes small, but no event in past history can be so established that there is no room for the doubter to question it without involving himself in contradiction. Hence the difficult position of a religion which claims to rest upon a basis of history, it is to that extent built upon a foundation which can never be made absolutely secure. In the past

it may plead probability and in the present it may appeal to experience, but in so far as it appeals to history it must admit an element of uncertainty which precludes the possibility of proof.

It is no part of the present enquiry to consider to what extent and in what sense Christianity is an historical religion, but we may be allowed to point out that the more the historical element is emphasized the greater is the degree of uncertainty introduced. From this point of view the Apostles' Creed is the most difficult of all credal formularies, inasmuch as it consists so largely of historical statements. Not one can be proved, and the burden is thrown upon faith. It is not a satisfactory position, for estimates of probability differ, and faith is not an ability to accept historical statements upon insufficient evidence. Christianity must always remain in some sense an historical religion, inasmuch as it had a definite beginning in time, but it seems a wise policy to reduce the historical element to a minimum and to emphasize those aspects which are less obviously open to attack.

It is an interesting question whether and to what extent the Christian doctrine of the resurrection of the body is bound up with the acceptance of the resurrection of Jesus as a historical fact, and whether, if the two may be held apart, the latter has any fundamental religious importance. This is all part of the great question brought into prominence by the Roman Catholic modernists fifteen or twenty years ago. Can salvation depend upon the correctness of

an historical judgment? The Church has always held that it does so depend, but there are not a few thinkers to-day who are conscious of the difficulties involved, and many who, though they would be unwilling to grant the possibility of a complete separation between faith and historical belief, are yet prepared to grant a considerable latitude in matters of detail. Thus with regard to the resurrection they hold that although a belief in the survival of Jesus after death is an essential element in any faith which claims the Christian title, yet in all secondary questions a wide freedom of judgment should be granted. Whether the resurrection took place on the third day is, they think, a matter of history in regard to which the paucity of the evidence justifies differences of opinion; whether the tomb was empty or not is another question on which all will not judge alike; how far any particular appearance is to be relied upon can only be decided by careful sifting of the evidence, and again variety of opinion is justified.

How much there is to be said for this theory can only be realized after the evidence has been examined in detail: the endeavour to save something of the old position will be welcome to those who fear the total relativity of modernism, but others regard such a view as no more than a halting-place on the road which leads to the complete separation of history from theology. If so much is granted, can the rest be denied?

It is hardly necessary to defend the historical method in dealing with the resurrection narratives.

Questions of faith may be involved in our enquiry, but we are primarily concerned with matters of history and as matters of history they must be discussed. Our task is to discover what the early Christians believed and why they believed it, and the further problem of our own conclusions must wait upon our study of the evidence. In such an enquiry the truest reverence is expressed in the most rigid impartiality. The sacred historian cannot forget that much may depend upon his conclusions, but he must not for that reason allow his judgment to be warped by respect for long-treasured beliefs, be they his own or the beliefs of others.

Unless reverence includes impartiality, it is merely prejudice masquerading under a false name. Historical investigation may not enable us to reach certainty with regard to an historical question, but it is the only method which we are entitled to use. An appeal to faith to supplement evidence is altogether out of place. Faith plays its part in the interpretation of facts, but in their determination it is a disturbing factor which the conscientious historian will endeavour to exclude. That he may never succeed in overcoming his personal prejudices, or prevent the wish being father to the thought, is no reason why he should not make the attempt. Nor can any excuse be found for those who quarrel with his conclusions on any other ground than their historical unsoundness. If a conclusion is unwelcome there is the more reason for those who do not wish to adopt it to scrutinize with the utmost diligence the grounds

on which it is based, but no other method of attack is legitimate. The effect which it may have upon accepted dogma is wholly irrelevant: if dogma is based upon history it is based upon evidence, and by the soundness of evidence it must stand or fall.

Theological dogma is so intimately concerned with the most precious interests of life that the tendency to intolerance of free enquiry persists more obstinately in this than in other spheres. It is natural that it should be so, but the effort required to escape prejudice is an effort which must be made, not least in the interests of those dogmas which it is hoped to defend. However true an article of faith may be, it is seriously compromised if it be presented as a conclusion based on false premises and defended by unsound arguments, for among those who approach its consideration with an open mind a predisposition is created unfavourable to its acceptance. Honest and impartial enquiry is always difficult, and in reaching firm conclusions the method is often slow, but it is the only method by which we may hope to lay the foundations of a faith acceptable to the modern mind. It may not be the faith of the past, but the past is dead and our concern is with the future.

THE NARRATIVES OF THE RESURRECTION

CHAPTER I

THE WITNESS OF ST. PAUL

THE earliest literary evidence of the resurrection of Jesus is that of the Apostle St. Paul. It is true that in Acts there are speeches which refer to the fact and which date from a time long prior to St. Paul's conversion. But the Acts was not written until at least twenty years after the earlier Pauline Epistles, and we cannot estimate with certainty the degree of accuracy with which the speeches of the Apostles are recorded. The earliest of the gospels is of later date than the Pauline Epistles; so that St. Paul provides the earliest first-hand evidence of the belief of the primitive Church.

He is very far from telling us all we should like to know. The Apostle had little interest in history, and he was not concerned in any of his extant letters to set forth a detailed narrative of facts, but he does in many passages refer to the resurrection incidentally, and in one passage (1 Cor. xv.) he treats the subject at length. From his epistles we can gain some idea of what the Apostle, writing some twenty years after the crucifixion, thought on a subject which was to him of crucial importance.

It may be as well for us to call to mind what opportunities St. Paul had had for acquainting himself with the evidence of the resurrection. At the time of his conversion it is not likely that he knew much about the beliefs of the Church or the grounds on which they rested; he had been interested in Christianity as a persecutor, and persecutors do not study evidences. After his conversion he stayed a short time in Damascus,[1] where he might learn much from those whom he had come to persecute, but where he would not meet any who could give him first-hand information.

His first visit to Jerusalem was 'after three years,' when he went up to greet Cephas (Gal. i. 18). He came as a member of the Christian society interested in all the concerns of his fellow-Christians, and as a missionary presumably anxious to collect the facts on which his preaching must be based. We must avoid the anachronism of picturing St. Paul as conducting an elaborate historical investigation. The arguments he used were not those which a modern preacher would employ, and the facts on which they were based were not those to which a modern preacher would appeal. But no preacher in any age could afford to neglect the evidences of the resurrection, and it is difficult to imagine St. Paul visiting Jerusalem without conversing with the leaders of the Church about the resurrection. He must have heard who were the witnesses and how the great news became known to the Church.

And yet there are certain qualifying considerations which must not be forgotten. A considerable period had

[1] Acts ix. 23, *ἡμέραι ἱκαναί*, but cf. Gal. i. 16, 'Immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood, neither went I up to Jerusalem to them that were apostles before me, but I went away to Arabia, and again returned to Damascus.'

elapsed since his conversion. St. Paul was no longer a recent convert [1] eager to gather information; to a large extent his opinions were formed, and he must already have known a good deal about the beginnings of the Church. We know the bent of his mind, and we are justified in inferring that details of history would not be among those things which he was most anxious to discuss with Cephas. The meaning of salvation in Christ, the significance of the death upon the Cross, the place of the Law of Moses in the Christian dispensation, the possibility of reaching the Gentiles, and the terms on which they could be admitted to the Church, these were subjects which might well provide material for debate in the brief fortnight that he spent with Cephas. The resurrection was surely mentioned, but it must not be assumed that St. Paul's enquiries as to the historical basis of the Church's faith were exhaustive. Moreover, the visit was of a private character: 'Other apostles saw I none save James the Lord's brother.' [2]

St. Paul spent the years that followed in the regions of Syria and Cilicia (Gal. i. 21), out of touch with the leaders of the Church. There is no reason for supposing that he heard any more details of the resurrection during that period. We need not enter further into the vexed question of the relationship of Galatians and Acts; it is

[1] The description in Acts ix. 26–30 is very difficult to accept. The dread of Saul among those whom he had so recently persecuted is hard to understand three years after his conversion. Damascus is less than a hundred and fifty miles from Jerusalem, traffic between the two cities was regular, and an event so dramatic as the sudden conversion of the Church's bitterest enemy must surely have become notorious in a very short time. We cannot believe that at the time of his visit it was still unknown even to the leaders of the Jerusalem Church.

[2] If the account in Acts is untrustworthy, we may reject the author's picture of Saul moving about freely among the members of the Jerusalem community (Acts ix. 28 f.).

admitted that whether, as Ramsay thinks, Gal. ii. describes the visit related in Acts xi. 30, or, as perhaps the majority of scholars suppose, it is to be identified with the visit of Acts xv., St. Paul did journey twice to Jerusalem before the date of writing 1 Corinthians. The circumstances were in both cases peculiar. On the first occasion he was fully occupied with the distribution of relief, and in the midst of famine conditions he was not likely to have much leisure for discussing the historical evidence of the resurrection. If Gal. ii. 1–10 describes this earlier visit, it is clear that St. Paul's mind was already occupied with the question of the status of Gentile converts. The same is true of the visit at the time of the Council of Jerusalem. The controversy about the Law was now the topic of absorbing interest in the Jerusalem Church, and Acts xv. implies, if it does not state, that when once the decision of the Church had been made, St. Paul returned immediately to Antioch. We can well believe that during his sojourn at Jerusalem the resurrection was never once mentioned in his conversations with the resident members of the local Church.

What opportunity, then, had St. Paul for collecting accurate information about the resurrection? So far it appears to have been less than we are accustomed to think. In Arabia and in Tarsus he was not likely to be in touch with any witnesses able to enlighten him. On his three journeys to Jerusalem he saw very little of the elder apostles; on the first occasion he only met Cephas and James, and on the two last occasions he was wholly absorbed in other matters. This must be borne in mind when we come to consider his silence on the experiences of the women at the tomb. St. Paul is not likely to have been very diligent in collecting information, for to him the proof of the resurrection was in his own experience, but if the senior apostles did discuss the resurrection with

him, it is very much more probable that they told the story of their own experiences than that they related a narrative about certain women of whom St. Paul had never heard. We must take some account of human nature.

But a further consideration has to be borne in mind. Although St. Paul spent but a short time at Jerusalem, he lived a whole year at Antioch (Acts xi. 26), and there he must have become acquainted with the traditions of the local Church. Antioch was near enough to Jerusalem to make it certain that no very great divergence between the traditions of the two Churches could exist, and we know that one at least of the Apostles visited the younger community (Gal. ii. 11). We may conclude, therefore, that when St. Paul left Antioch on his first missionary journey he was acquainted with the facts as to the resurrection which were generally known in the circles surrounding the Apostles.

We may now proceed to an examination of St. Paul's testimony.

His *obiter dicta* scattered through the epistles do not give much information. The letters were for the most part addressed to churches which had already had the advantage of St. Paul's elementary instruction, and which accepted the resurrection as a fact; it would therefore have been superfluous for him to dwell upon what they had already believed. Happily for later generations there was at Corinth a party which developed unorthodox views, and in answer to them St. Paul was compelled to go into detail to an extent which he would otherwise have considered unnecessary. We may infer that some of the Corinthians found the doctrine of the resurrection of the body incredible, and took refuge in a rationalistic doctrine of a spiritual resurrection at baptism. Whether they drew the inference that since dead Christians would

not rise the dead Christ had not risen, we cannot say; but St. Paul is convinced that the two questions are essentially one, and he insists that if there is no future resurrection there can be no truth in the tradition of the resurrection of Christ. This compels him to recapitulate the evidence on which his teaching rested and occasions his famous chapter.

St. Paul begins by laying great emphasis upon the fact of his earlier preaching and the acceptance of his message by the Corinthian Christians:

xv. 1–2.

I make known unto you[1] brethren the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye received, wherein also ye stand, through which also ye are being saved, if ye are holding fast with what word I preached it unto you, unless perchance ye believed rashly.[2]

The Apostle insists that whether in the past, the present, or the future, the fact of the resurrection is central in their Christian faith—unless indeed their conversion is superficial. In the past they were converted to the belief in the resurrection, in the present they stand therein, and their future salvation is dependent upon their continuing to hold it fast. The resurrection is no mere appendage to

[1] *γνωρίζω δὲ ὑμῖν*, 'I beg to call to your notice.' St. Paul is not proclaiming anything new.

[2] There is some doubt as to the translation of *τίνι λόγῳ εὐηγγελισάμην ὑμῖν εἰ κατέχετε*. W.H. put a comma after *ὑμῖν*, in which case we understand *γνωρίζω ὑμῖν* repeated, and translate 'I make known, I say, in what word I preached it unto you, if ye hold it fast, except ye believed rashly.' But the order is very awkward, since the preaching did not depend upon the condition of belief, and it seems better to take the sentence in the sense 'Ye are being saved if ye hold fast the doctrine just as I preached it to you.' *τίνι λόγῳ* stands first in order to give it emphasis. *εἰκῇ* translated in E.V. 'in vain' is rather 'rashly,' without due consideration of the issues involved. Robertson and Plummer, *1 Corinthians*, pp. 331 f.

the Christian faith, it is an essential element of belief. He then goes on to recapitulate the facts :

xv. 3–11.

For I delivered unto you first of all [1] what I also received, that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures, and that he was buried, and that he hath been raised on the third day according to the scriptures, and that he appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve. Then he appeared to more than five hundred brethren at once, of whom the most part remain unto this time, but some are fallen asleep. Then he appeared to James, then to all the apostles, and last of all as to one born out of due time he appeared also to me. For I am the least of the apostles, who am not fit to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the Church of God. But by the grace of God I am what I am, and his grace towards me was not in vain, but I have laboured more abundantly than they all, yet not I but the grace of God with me. Whether therefore it be I or they, so we preach and so ye believed.

The passage states clearly that part of St. Paul's original preaching which he put in the forefront (ἐν πρώτοις). That Christ died, that he was buried, that he hath been raised on the third day, and that he appeared to a number of his disciples. However little interest St. Paul may have taken in the history of the life of Jesus, these events he considered essential to the gospel which he preached. Had he not believed them he would have had no such message of salvation as that which he delivered to the Corinthians. The death and resurrection of Christ had a cosmic significance which separated them from all other historical events. That being so, it was no matter for surprise that they had been foreseen of old, they were ' according to the scriptures.'

Presumably the Corinthians were familiar with those texts from the Old Testament which were generally quoted

[1] ἐν πρώτοις. The phrase occurs in Gen. xxxiii. 2, to translate *rishonah* ' in the forefront.'

as prophecies of the crucifixion and the resurrection: St. Paul assumes that his statement will be granted and does not pause to explain. It is somewhat surprising, therefore, that the New Testament does not make it clear upon what texts reliance was commonly placed. For the crucifixion Mark xiv. 27 quotes Zech. xiii. 7, 'I will smite the shepherd and the sheep shall be scattered,' but otherwise quotations seem to be made only from Isa. liii.,[1] and the citations hardly justify Acts iii. 18, 'The things which God foreshewed by the mouth of all the prophets that his Christ should suffer.'

The exact references to the resurrection which the early Church thought that it could detect in the scriptures are even more difficult to determine. Ps. xvi. 10, 'Thou wilt not give thy Holy One to see corruption,' is quoted in Acts ii. 27 and xiii. 35, but that seems to be the only actual quotation, and even so obvious a text as Hos. vi. 2, 'On the third day he will raise us up,' does not appear in the New Testament. The important thing to notice, however, in this passage of the first epistle to the Corinthians, is that St. Paul fully believed his teaching on the death and resurrection of Jesus to be in accordance with Scripture, and by the emphatic repetition of 'according to the scriptures' he wished to insist on an authority greater than his own. For us, the position is reversed, for while the testimony of the Apostle is in our judgment of the highest importance, the fancied anticipations of Old Testament writers carry very little weight. We may indeed allow that the ways of God are unchangeable in all ages, but that certain things must happen in the present because they have been prophesied in the past is to us a strange and an unacceptable idea. The fifty-third

[1] Definitely cited Matt. viii. 17, Mark xv. 28 (R.T.), Acts vii. 32, Rom. iv. 25, viii. 34, 1 Peter ii. 24 f.

chapter of Isaiah is a prophecy of the crucifixion inasmuch as it is a singularly striking and beautiful expression of the fact that the innocent suffer for the redemption of the guilty, but that the prophet actually foresaw and in a sense described the events of Holy Week is a contention which few scholars to-day would have the courage to defend. The relevance of other texts on which the early Church relied is open to question directly they are examined in the light of historical criticism.

To return to the passage quoted from 1 Cor. xv., we must ask, Why does St. Paul mention the apparently unimportant detail of the burial? We know how much he built upon the death and resurrection of Christ, but the fact that Jesus was buried seems unworthy of being mentioned in the same sentence with events on which salvation depends.

The answer seems to lie in the importance of the burial of Christ in early Christian apologetic, a fact which may also account for the place it has in the creeds. Among those who questioned the fact of the resurrection there would be some who sought to destroy the evidence of the empty tomb by suggesting that it had never been filled: Jesus had never died, or his body had been disposed of in some other manner than that recorded in the gospels. Therefore the Church in collecting the evidence for the resurrection would be careful to include a definite mention of the burial, and St. Paul refers to it here either from force of habit, or because he wishes to leave no loophole for the sceptics of Corinth. The gospel accounts of the burial we must examine in a later chapter, but the bare mention of the fact in this passage need occasion no surprise.

The next phrase which calls for notice is 'he hath been raised on the third day' (ἐγήγερται τῇ ἡμέρᾳ τῇ τρίτῃ). The sudden introduction of the perfect tense among a

series of aorists is unexpected, and does not combine well with the mention of the third day. Why does St. Paul use the perfect? We can only answer that he wishes to emphasize the abiding effect of the resurrection in the continued fellowship of Christ with his Church. Christ died once and for all for sinners, that event is past and salvation secured, but he has risen from the dead and is still living, 'making intercession for us.'[1] Elsewhere St. Paul uses the aorist in speaking of the resurrection, so that too much stress must not be laid on the perfect in this passage, but the transition is too marked to be without any significance.

More important is the use of the words 'on the third day.' The phrase proves that within thirty years of the date of the crucifixion the faith of the Church in the resurrection was a belief in an event which took place on a definite date. In this chapter St. Paul makes no mention of the visit of the women to the sepulchre, so that it might have been argued that he only thought of the resurrection in connection with the appearances and did not relate it to any event on Easter morning. These words rule out that contention. St. Paul may or may not have heard the story of the women; if he heard it he may or may not have given it credence, but he certainly believed that the subsequent appearances were consequent upon an event which occurred on the third day. In the thought of St. Paul, Jesus was not raised merely in the sense of continued survival, he was raised at a particular time. The phrase 'on the third day' comes awkwardly after the perfect tense, 'he hath been raised,' and would not have been inserted had it not had special significance. Again the whole phrase 'he hath been raised on the third day,' following immediately upon 'that he was

[1] Rom. viii. 34.

buried,' almost certainly means that St. Paul believed that the same body of Jesus which had been buried was on the third day raised from the tomb.[1]

That St. Paul held this belief seems the obvious inference from his words, but the question as to the evidence which he had for his belief is not easily answered. It is remarkable that he makes no mention of the empty tomb, and says nothing about any appearance to the women. It is not very safe to declare what a writer nineteen centuries ago must have done in certain circumstances, but we should certainly have expected St. Paul not to have omitted this most important point in an argument intended to establish the faith of converts who needed to be convinced. The explanations offered are unsatisfying. It has been said that St. Paul's anti-feminine prejudices forbade him to quote the testimony of women. That is absurd. St. Paul, speaking from experience, found it advisable to discourage women from holding forth in the assembly of believers, but there could be no sufficient reason why he should refuse to quote their testimony on a point on which the value of their witness would have been unique. It has been said that St. Paul did not refer to the women because he thought their evidence unimportant and hardly worthy of special mention. But we cannot believe that St. Paul, if he had known of the empty tomb, would have considered it a fact of no significance. As we have just seen, it fits in well with his conceptions, and a report that certain women found the body gone on the third day must surely have appealed to him as a valuable piece of evidence. He was not mentioning the facts incidentally, he was collecting and presenting arguments with all the force he could in

[1] It may have been transmuted, so that it was no longer 'flesh and blood,' but it was the same body still.

order to convince some whose faith has been shaken. It is very difficult to believe that if he had known it he would have failed to mention a fact of so much significance.

There can be only two explanations of his silence; either he did not know the story of the women, or he did not consider it added anything to the evidence for the resurrection. In any case the inference is that it was not known in Jerusalem and Antioch at this time in the form which appears in the later gospels. If it were commonly believed that the women had found the tomb empty and that they had received from an angel an announcement of the resurrection, St. Paul must have been aware of the tradition, and it is incredible that he would have omitted to mention it in his argument addressed to the Corinthians. There seems to be no escape from the conclusion that, at least in well-informed circles, no such story was accepted. It is not enough to reply that the argument from silence is never to be relied upon. Sometimes it is very strong, and this is just such a case. St. Paul appears to have believed that the tomb was empty on the first day of the week, but he omits to quote the one piece of evidence which would have supported his belief, the one piece of evidence with which anyone acquainted with the gospel narratives would certainly have begun. It will be necessary to scrutinize those narratives with very great care.

We pass now to the consideration of the appearances which St. Paul records:

xv. 5.

He appeared to Cephas; then to the twelve; then he appeared to above five hundred brethren at once, of whom the greater part remain until now, but some are fallen asleep; then he appeared to James; then to all the apostles; and last of all, as unto one born out of due time, he appeared to me also.

St. Paul mentions six appearances, and there is every reason to suppose that he intends the list to be exhaustive. Of these six, the last is, without question, to be identified with the appearance on the road to Damascus described in Acts ix., Acts xxii., and Acts xxvi.; the appearances to the five hundred and to James are not elsewhere described in the New Testament; but it may be possible to identify the remaining appearances with some of those described in the gospels.

(*a*) The appearance to James seems to have left no trace at all on the pages of the New Testament, so that there is little to be said about it. That St. Paul means James the brother of the Lord can hardly be doubted. At the time when he wrote the first epistle to the Corinthians, 'James' would naturally be taken to mean the well-known head of the Church at Jerusalem; the son of Zebedee had been dead many years (Acts xii. 2), and it is unlikely that 'James the Less' had ever been heard of in Corinth. 'James' was certainly the same whom St. Paul saw on the occasion of his first visit to Jerusalem (Gal. i. 19). To him, says St. Paul, the risen Lord appeared. It is not safe to lay too much stress upon the order in which St. Paul mentions the appearances, but the form of his sentences certainly suggests that he was not writing his list haphazard; (*εἶτα . . . ἔπειτα . . . ἔπειτα . . . εἶτα . . . ἔσχατον πάντων*). The inference is that St. Paul thought that he was recounting the appearances in the order in which they occurred. If so, he wished the Corinthians to understand that the Lord appeared to James at some time between the appearance to the five hundred brethren and the appearance to all the apostles. The identification of these two latter appearances is so uncertain that this conclusion does not give ground for anything like accurate dating, but we

can assume that St. Paul considered the appearance to James to be one of the latest appearances; if that 'to all the apostles' is the last meeting between the risen Lord and his disciples, the appearance to James immediately preceded it.

Considering the importance of James in the early Church, it is a matter of surprise that we know so little about him. That he was not among the declared followers of Christ during his lifetime seems certain. When his mother and his brethren sought for him (Mark iii. 31), it was not as disciples, and we may well believe that the verdict of his relatives [1] represented the common opinion of his brethren. The fourth gospel probably reflects a reliable tradition in the words 'even his brethren did not believe in him.' [2] That being so, it is clear that shortly after the crucifixion they changed their opinion, for Acts i. 14 represents the mother and brethren of Jesus as prominent in the earliest Church immediately after the ascension. Even if no weight be allowed to the statement of the author of Acts, the fact that James soon became prominent in the Jerusalem Church shows that a notable change in his views had taken place. What can have caused it? It is most improbable that the crucifixion of his brother would lead James to throw in his lot with the Church of his disciples, and some other cause must be sought. Is not the fact of his conversion a valuable confirmation of St. Paul's statement? Somehow James must have become convinced that Jesus had risen from the dead, and the evidence which carried conviction to one who had known Jesus as a child and lived with him in the home at Nazareth must have been strong indeed. Can it have

[1] Mark iii. 21. *οἱ παρ' αὐτοῦ ἐξῆλθον κρατῆσαι αὐτόν, ἔλεγον γὰρ ὅτι ἐξέστη.*

[2] John vii. 5.

been anything less compelling than the evidence of his own senses?

We may conclude that, although we know nothing of the details, the statement of St. Paul that Jesus appeared to James is intrinsically probable.[1]

(*b*) The appearance to Cephas may be compared with that to James: St. Paul knew both men fairly well, he had had opportunities of hearing their testimony from their own lips, and therefore his evidence in both cases is good; and yet neither appearance seems to have left a clear impression upon the tradition of the early Church. When we consider the prominent position of Peter and James in the Jerusalem community and in the Church at large, we cannot fail to be surprised that such should be the case. Peter, we know, bore his testimony on many occasions, and so presumably did James; we should have expected them to tell their own experiences so often that the narrative of the appearances to them would have taken a prominent place in the traditions of all the churches, and would have figured largely in the synoptic gospels, and yet the gospels make no mention of any appearance to James, and the identification of the appearance 'to Simon' is open to question.

[1] Jerome quotes the Gospel according to the Hebrews: Evangelicum quod appellatur 'secundum Hebræos' post resurrectionem Salvatoris refert, 'Dominus autem quum dedisset sindonem suum servo sacerdotis ivit ad Jacobum et apparuit ei. Juraverat enim Jacobus se non comesturum panem ab illa hora qua biberat calicem Domini donec videret eum resurgentem a mortuis.' Rursusque post paululum '"Afferte" ait Dominus "mensam et panem."' Statimque additur 'Tulit panem et benedixit ac fregit et post dedit Jacobo Justo et dixit ei "Frater mi, comede panem tuum, quia resurrexit Filius Hominis a dormientibus."' (*De Viris ill.* 2.)

The story as it stands will not bear examination, for James was not present at the Last Supper; but it testifies to a belief in quite early times that the Lord appeared to James a very short while after the crucifixion. More than that we cannot say.

As witnesses to the earliest tradition the gospels as we have them are defective in one very important particular: St. Mark, on which St. Matthew is based and on which St. Luke relied to a great extent, has lost its ending—the section in which the appearances of the risen Lord would be related. There is every reason to believe that the mutilation of the MS. happened at a very early date, before either St. Matthew or St. Luke had read it, perhaps before it had been copied, so that the first and third gospels give no indication of the way in which St. Mark concluded his narrative.[1] It is at least probable that the second gospel, which according to tradition embodies the reminiscences of St. Peter, originally contained an account of an appearance to Simon. St. Paul's statement, together with Luke xxiv. 34, proves that there was in very early days a tradition of such an appearance, and it is in the last chapter of Mark, if anywhere, that we should expect to find it narrated. There are indications in the gospel that Mark intended to describe an appearance to Peter.[2] The message of the young man arrayed in a white robe is 'Go tell his disciples and Peter he goeth before you into Galilee; there shall ye see him, as he said unto you' (Mark xvi. 7). The special mention of Peter seems to demand some explanation, and if the author, having in the passage in which the appearances in Galilee were predicted (xiv. 28) recorded Peter's rash boast and subsequent failure, now proceeded to relate how by a special appearance the Lord conveyed to Peter his forgiveness, his narrative would be both consistent and dramatic.

The suggestion that in the appearance by the sea of Tiberias of John xxi. we have a development of Mark's original narrative is not intrinsically improbable. Through-

[1] Streeter, *The Four Gospels*, pp. 338 ff.
[2] See below, pp. 45, 141 ff.

out the narrative of John xxi. Simon Peter is the central figure, and this, or something like it, may well have been known as an appearance ' to Cephas.' Only the date is difficult. St. Luke and St. Paul seem to regard this appearance as the first evidence of the resurrection, whereas in the fourth gospel it is represented as the last.[1]

Apart, however, from these speculations, we may admit the probability that St. Paul has here preserved for us a genuine and important tradition. That the Lord did appear to Simon is attested by St. Luke, and almost certainly by St. Mark and the Gospel of Peter. The lack of detail in surviving tradition remains a difficulty, but it is conceivable that the conversation between the Lord and his repentant disciple was of so intimate a kind that St. Peter did not care to relate it. If so, the early Church may have found the incident comparatively uninteresting, and the story having no striking features may have fallen into oblivion or have been combined with other material. The visit of the women, or the walk to Emmaus, or the final interview with the disciples, would lend itself to dramatic recital much more easily than a conversation with a single disciple, the details of which were wholly unknown. So this appearance was forgotten.

A further reason why the tradition of an appearance to Simon was soon forgotten is to be found in the development of the ' Jerusalem tradition.' Some incidents originally related as taking place in Galilee could be transferred to Jerusalem, but this narrative, being associated with a fishing expedition, could not be so transferred for the simple

[1] The fact that John xxi. is an appendix, and not part of the gospel as originally planned, weakens this objection. It is remarkable that John xx., though describing Peter's visit to the tomb, records no appearance to him. The whole question is discussed at length in later chapters.

reason that there is no lake in the neighbourhood of Jerusalem. In some circles the tradition of an appearance to Simon may have survived in stories relating to an earlier period in the ministry (Matt. xiv. 25 ff., John vi. 19 ff.).

(*c*) The appearance 'to the Twelve' is presumably to be identified either with that described in Matt. xxviii. 16 ff. which took place in Galilee, or with that described in Luke xxiv. 36 ff. and John xx. 19 which occurred in Jerusalem. St. Paul gives no details, and we may postpone the consideration of this incident until we come to examine the narratives of the gospels, only noting that St. Paul, with his peculiar facilities for collecting information on such a point, believed that there had been an appearance to the apostles as a body.

(*d*) St. Paul evidently distinguishes between the appearance 'to the Twelve,' and a subsequent appearance 'to all the apostles.' The revelation to James separates the two events. Again he gives no details, and we may choose any of the appearances described in the gospels as those to which he refers. We only remark that St. Paul believed the Lord to have manifested himself to groups of apostles on more than one occasion, a fact which warns us against any tendency to identify too freely the narratives of the several gospels.

(*e*) Peculiar difficulties surround the mention of the appearance to 'more than five hundred brethren at once, of whom the greater part remain until now, but some are fallen asleep.' No note of place is given, and it is only hinted that the manifestation occurred after the first appearance to the Twelve and before the appearance to James. It is astonishing that the tradition has left no mark on any of the four gospels. It may have appeared in the lost ending of Mark, but there seems

to be no positive reason for supposing that it did, and in any case one would have expected the remembrance of a fact of which there were more than five hundred witnesses to have survived independently of the fate of a single MS. This is a serious objection to the acceptance of St. Paul's statement, and other considerations do not increase our confidence. Who were the five hundred? and why were they gathered together? They were not Judeans; that is certain, for the Church at Jerusalem before Pentecost did not number five hundred. Are we to suppose that after the disaster of the crucifixion even Galilee contained five hundred brethren willing to leave their occupations and gather together in some remote place in the name of the defeated Master? If the story is historical, some summons must have been issued, and a place and date appointed. It is not impossible (Mark xvi. 7), but it seems unlikely that tradition would have lost sight of a mass meeting such as this. The suggestion has been made that the story of the first gospel which does embody a tradition of an appearance in Galilee (Matt. xxviii. 16 ff.) is a description of this manifestation to the five hundred brethren.[1] No such impression is given by the narrative as it stands. 'The eleven disciples went into Galilee unto the mountain where Jesus had appointed them; and when they saw him, they worshipped him.' Who would suppose that a crowd of five hundred was present? Nor is the commission which follows suitable for a general body of brethren.

We have no evidence on which to form a certain conclusion, but the balance of probability seems to incline towards the view that St. Paul has accepted a story which was not generally known in the Church, which contained

[1] Swete, *The Appearances of Our Lord*, pp. 82 ff.

intrinsic improbabilities, and which did not represent with any degree of accuracy an historical occurrence.[1]

That he should have done so is surprising, but we must remember that St. Paul had no training in historical criticism and no personal acquaintance with the Galilean Christians. His statement that 'the greater part remain until now' may be no more than an inference based upon the common expectation of life, and does not necessarily increase the value of his testimony; believing as he did that five hundred men had seen the Lord some twenty-five years ago, he was justified in adding the assertion that most of them were still alive when he wrote; he does not say that he has ever met or spoken with one of them.

If this conclusion is not accepted, the only alternative seems to lie in a theory that the narrative of this appearance belonged to the early Galilee tradition which was lost in the development of the 'Jerusalem tradition.' That is not impossible, but one would have expected even the Church at Jerusalem to retain some recollection of so important an event. Out of five hundred Galileans some must have visited Jerusalem from time to time and they would be eager to recount their experiences. It is conceivable that the story which they told did not carry conviction even in that uncritical age, and so gained only a limited currency. That it ever arose at all requires some explanation, but with the evidence at our disposal we cannot hope to solve the problem. Once the faith in the resurrection had been established, a misunderstood phrase in conversation, a fanciful interpretation of prophecy, or the pure spirit of romance, might be enough to send a story on its way. It is often impossible to trace the rise of a legend, but that legends do arise is not open to question.

[1] Or could this be St. Paul's version of Pentecost?

(*f*) It only remains to consider St. Paul's reference to the appearance of Christ to himself. 'And last of all as unto one born out of due time he appeared to me also.' The striking fact is that St. Paul does not seem conscious of any important difference between the appearance on the road to Damascus and those already mentioned. He classes his experience with those of Cephas, James, and the other apostles. Had he known the story of the ascension he would hardly have done that, for although the author of Acts records appearances of Christ after the day that he ascended up into Heaven he clearly regards them as of a different kind from those which preceded the ascension, as visions of the exalted Saviour rather than as appearances of the risen body of Christ. If we may judge only from this passage in the first epistle to the Corinthians, St. Paul made no such distinction; as evidence of the resurrection the vision on the road to Damascus was as valuable as the appearance to St. Peter, only it was distinguished by being later in time. So much may be admitted, but we must not pass to the assumption that because St. Paul did not recognize any difference between the two classes of appearance no such difference existed, or that because a psychologist can account fairly easily for St. Paul's experience on the road to Damascus he could as easily explain the experience of St. Peter. St. Paul, as we have said, was no critic, and to him, collecting evidences of the continued existence of the Lord, his own vision may have seemed quite as convincing as occurrences which are not so easily explained on a subjective basis. But a modern investigator might draw distinctions which did not appear to St. Paul.

St. Paul was naturally anxious to maintain his own authority and to insist that his experiences were as valid

as those of the senior Apostles,[1] we cannot be surprised that he did not pause to ask whether his vision was equivalent to the experiences of Cephas and of James. At the same time, this passage warns us that St. Paul would have admitted a vision pure and simple as an appearance of the risen Lord; he would not have criticized on the ground of subjectivism an experience of one of the earlier apostles if that experience differed little from what he himself had known. That fact must be borne in mind in estimating the value of St. Paul's evidence.

To sum up the results of this investigation. St. Paul was a man of education who had had unusual opportunities for gathering information about the events which followed the crucifixion. He was not a critical historian, and we have no right to assume that he was particularly careful to examine the evidence for stories which he heard, but he wrote so soon after the events to which he refers, and the probability is so great that he had received much of his information at first hand, that there is strong *prima facie* reason for accepting his statements as correct. He himself regarded his information as establishing beyond question the fact of Christ's resurrection, and whatever his critical shortcomings, he was in a better position to form an opinion than any modern writer. Even though one of his statements appears to rest upon no very solid foundation, that admission in no way disposes of the rest; it is not too much to say that the evidence of St. Paul proves not only that he and the rest of the early Church were convinced that the Christ who had died was still living and active, but also that their faith was founded on a solid basis of fact.

On the negative side St. Paul's evidence is hardly less

[1] 1 Cor. ix. 1. 'Am I not an Apostle? Have I not seen Jesus our Lord?'

important. Two early beliefs of the Church he does not support; he shows no sign of acquaintance with the story of the discovery of the empty tomb by the women, and he ignores the story of the ascension as distinct from the resurrection. The importance of these omissions can be better appreciated after a study of the gospels has been made.

CHAPTER II

THE SEPULCHRE

THE gospel narratives of the resurrection may be examined in either of two ways. We may take each gospel in turn and review its evidence, or we may take one by one the incidents recorded, and collect the information to be gleaned about them from all sources. There is something to be said for either method, but on the whole the latter is to be preferred.

The Death of Jesus

In the first two or three centuries there were not wanting those who, either from motives of reverence or to discredit the stories of the resurrection, suggested that the death of Jesus was unreal. The Johannine tradition of the piercing with a spear may represent an attempt to rule out this idea. The theory has no present importance, for no serious suggestion is made that those who took Jesus down from the cross were mistaken in thinking that life had fled. It is true that crucifixion was generally a slow and lingering death,[1] but there is nothing surprising in the fact that one of Jesus' sensitive nature died quickly of shock after the experiences of the last twenty-four hours.

[1] Eusebius speaks of Egyptian martyrs crucified head downwards, yet kept alive till they died of starvation (H.E. viii. 8).

Had he not been quite certainly dead the removal from the cross would not have been sanctioned by the Roman authority. That Pilate made enquiries[1] is only what we should expect.

The Burial

Crucifixion was not a Jewish punishment, but the hanging up of the bodies of dead criminals is several times mentioned in the Old Testament. Deut. xxi. 22 ff. contains legislation for the prompt removal of the bodies. 'If a man have committed a sin worthy of death, and thou hang him on a tree; his body shall not remain all night upon the tree, but thou shalt surely bury him the same day; for he that is hanged is accursed of God; that thou defile not thy land which the Lord thy God giveth thee.'[2]

It was therefore necessary to provide for the burial of crucified criminals before nightfall, and the statement of the fourth gospel that the Jews endeavoured to hasten death by breaking the sufferers' legs is not in itself improbable.[3] An unceremonious burial in the common grave followed.[4] All the gospels agree that this action by the Jews was anticipated in the case of Jesus by Joseph of Arimathæa.

The second and third gospels describe Joseph as a councillor (*βουλευτής*, a member of the Sanhedrim);

[1] Mark xv. 44.

[2] The incident of Rizpah (2 Sam. xxi.) seems to suggest an earlier practice. In the case of Jesus the fact that the next day was the Sabbath made burial specially urgent.

[3] *σκελοκοπία* was a punishment inflicted upon slaves. Westcott quotes Lactantius (*Divine Institutes*, iv. 26) to suggest that it was commonly a part of Jewish crucifixions, but Lactantius may not have been particularly well informed.

[4] Gospel of Peter ii. 'And Herod said, "Brother Pilate, if no one had asked for him we would have buried him, since indeed a Sabbath is dawning."'

the first gospel describes him as rich, and a disciple; Mark says that he was 'honourable' (εὐσχήμων), and that he was waiting for the Kingdom of God; Luke describes him as a good man and righteous, and adds that he had not consented to the condemnation of Jesus.

It is convenient to set forth these statements in parallel columns (page 27).

The literary dependence of Matthew and Luke upon Mark can hardly be doubted; the only question worth discussing is whether they had any other source of information besides the second gospel. There are several common omissions: (1) both postpone the mention of the Preparation;[1] (2) neither describes Joseph as 'honourable'; and (3) neither has any equivalent of 'boldly.' None of these points is important. (1) The mention of the Preparation might be taken to imply that Joseph's real motive was respect for the Mosaic Law, so that Matthew and Luke, who suggest other motives, would not care to include it before describing his action. (2) Mark's 'honourable' is probably represented by Matthew's 'rich' and Luke's 'a good man and a righteous.'[2] (3) The omission of 'boldly' may be explained by supposing that neither the first nor the third evangelist understood why Joseph's action involved any conspicuous display of courage.

The additions to the Marcan account seem no more important. Matthew has the statement that Joseph was made a disciple of Jesus,[3] which might be taken as testi-

[1] Matt. xxvii. 62, Luke xxiii. 54.

[2] Lake remarks that *εὐσχήμων* came to mean 'well-to-do,' so Matthew understands it in its popular sense, Luke in its literary sense (*The Resurrection of Jesus Christ*, p. 50).

[3] The verb *μαθητεύω* is used in the aorist passive with a dative following in chapter xiii. 52, a passage peculiar to Matthew; this may suggest a special source, but B has *ἐμαθήτευσεν* here.

MATTHEW XXVII. 57	MARK XV. 42	LUKE XXIII. 50	JOHN XIX. 38
When evening was come	And when evening was now come, because it was the Preparation, that is the day before the sabbath,	And behold,	And after these things
there came a rich man from Arimathæa, named Joseph, who was also himself made Jesus' disciple:	there came Joseph of Arimathæa, an honourable councillor, who also himself was looking for the Kingdom of God;	a man named Joseph, who was a councillor, a good man and a righteous (he had not consented to their counsel and deed), a man of Arimathæa, a city of the Jews, who was looking for the Kingdom of God:	Joseph of Arimathæa, being a disciple of Jesus, but secretly for fear of the Jews,
this man went to Pilate, and asked for the body of Jesus.	and he boldly went in to Pilate, and asked for the body of Jesus.	this man went to Pilate, and asked for the body of Jesus.	asked of Pilate that he might take away the body of Jesus.

fying to the existence of the tradition embodied in the fourth gospel. But it is more likely that the words are an interpretation—possibly erroneous—of Mark's 'looking for the Kingdom of God.' Luke, who has used a similar phrase of Simeon (Luke ii. 25), makes no such interpretation. It is not surprising that a Christian of the second generation, who understood the coming of the Kingdom only with reference to the parousia of Jesus, should assume that Joseph was a disciple.

Have we any reason for supposing that Matthew's interpretation is correct, and that Joseph was indeed a disciple? On the one hand, we must admit the great improbability that a member of the Sanhedrim resident in Jerusalem would have become a follower of the Prophet of Nazareth; and, on the other hand, we must acknowledge the difficulty of accounting for his action on any other hypothesis. Mark gives no hint that he regarded Joseph as a disciple, rather he suggests that he acted in accordance with Jewish scruples; Luke, unconcerned about the Jewish law, suggests that he was moved by pity for Jesus as for one unjustly condemned. As far as the above passages are concerned, there seems no other foundation for the statement of the first and fourth gospels than Matthew's misunderstanding of Mark. But if Joseph was not a disciple, would regard for Jewish ceremonial rules or dissatisfaction with the methods of the Sanhedrim provide a strong enough motive for his action in burying Jesus? We must consider what precisely his action was:

Matthew xxvii. 59	Mark xv. 46	Luke xxiii. 53
And Joseph took the body	And he bought a linen cloth and taking him down	And he took it down

Matthew xxvii. 59	Mark xv. 46	Luke xxiii. 53
and wrapped it in a clean linen cloth,	wound him in the linen cloth,	and wrapped it in a linen cloth,
and laid it in his own new tomb	and laid him in a tomb	and laid him in a tomb
which he had hewn out in the rock :	which had been hewn out of a rock ;	that was hewn in stone, where never man had yet lain.
and he rolled a great stone to the door of the tomb, and departed.	and he rolled a stone against the door of the tomb.	
* * *		
Now on the morrow which is the day after the Preparation, etc.		And it was the day of the Preparation, and the sabbath began to dawn.

1. Mark states that he bought linen. Matthew and Luke have no 'bought,' but both mention the linen, and Matthew calls it clean, i.e. newly purchased.
2. Both Matthew and Luke alter Mark's 'wound him' (ἐνείλησεν), but if ἐντυλίσσω was the technical word, the agreement of Matthew and Luke against Mark may be purely accidental.
3. Mark does not say that the sepulchre was previously empty. Both Matthew and Luke supply the omission, perhaps in accordance with a later tradition which had grown up under the influence of reverence. Matthew says it was a new tomb ; Luke that no man had yet been laid therein. Only Matthew states that the tomb belonged to Joseph.
4. Mark's plain statement that the tomb was hewn out of the rock is differently rendered by the first and third evangelists. Matthew says that Joseph

had hewn it in the rock; Luke that it was a hewn tomb or a tomb of hewn stone. In this place he says nothing about the stone with which the tomb was sealed, and it is possible that he failed to understand the type of tomb implied by Mark.[1]

5. In this passage, only Matthew says that the stone rolled against the door was 'a great stone,' but Mark adds, in xvi. 4, the note that the stone was 'very great.'

6. Luke's phrase, 'It was the day of Preparation and the Sabbath was dawning,' is transferred from the beginning of the Marcan narrative, and is, as it stands, strangely inaccurate. Many translate ἐπέφωσκεν 'was beginning,' and compare Herod's statement in the Gospel of Peter, ἐπεὶ καὶ σάββατον ἐπιφώσκει.[2] The phrase is discussed below.[3]

There is no indication that Matthew or Luke had any other source of information than Mark's narrative; it is therefore important to notice any peculiar features in Mark's account. There are two points of importance. Mark does not say that the tomb belonged to Joseph, and he does not say that it was new. The former statement is a natural inference from the fact that Joseph made use of the tomb, and the latter represents a belief which was quite certain to grow in the minds of Christians. None of the synoptists mentions any anointing of the body.

What grounds, then, have we for believing that Joseph was a disciple? It may seem the most natural explanation of his action as described by Mark, but it is only

[1] See, however, Luke xxiv. 2. 'They found the stone rolled away from the tomb.'

[2] Gospel of Peter ii.

[3] Page 38 f.

an explanation. There is no reason to suppose that Matthew was following an independent tradition. Alternative explanations are that he was acting on his own initiative, or that he was an agent of the Sanhedrim. The latter by itself is not sufficient. The Sanhedrim might be concerned to have the body removed, but they would be little interested in the method of disposal, and not at all likely to sanction the extravagance of a rock-hewn tomb. Perhaps the explanations may be combined, and we may suppose that Joseph was commissioned by the Sanhedrim to take down the body, but that, moved by compassion and a personal interest, he exceeded his commission and gave to the body of Jesus a reverent burial at his own expense. If Joseph was not definitely a disciple, we must put forward some hypothesis of this kind to explain his action.[1] In the short time at his disposal there was no actual need to buy linen and wrap up the body, and the suggestion[2] that a cave-tomb was used because there was no time to convey the body to the common grave is surely unconvincing. What happened to the bodies of the robbers?

If we had to choose between two theories of the motives of Joseph's action, we should admit on reflection that transcriptional probability favours Mark's account. Tradition would be very likely to turn a member of the Sanhedrim who performed a pious act into a disciple, but omission of all mention of his discipleship by Mark and Luke is strange if the tradition was primitive. It is significant that Matthew omits to mention that he was 'a councillor.'

We may now examine the much elaborated account of the fourth gospel.

[1] The Gospel of Peter calls Joseph 'the Lord's friend' (§ ii.).
[2] Lake, *op. cit.*, p. 174. Cf. John xix. 42.

John xix. 38.

He came therefore and took away his body. And there came also Nicodemus, he who at the first came to him by night, bringing a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about a hundred pound weight. So they took the body of Jesus and bound it in linen cloths with the spices, as the custom of the Jews is to bury. Now in the place where he was crucified there was a garden; and in the garden a new tomb wherein was never man yet laid. There then because of the Jews' Preparation (for the tomb was nigh at hand) they laid Jesus.

The following points strike us at once:

1. Joseph, already described as a disciple of Jesus, but secretly for fear of the Jews, brings with him Nicodemus. It is clear that Joseph must have had some assistance in the heavy work of removing the body from the cross and embalming it. If he acted as the agent of the Sanhedrim, no doubt he would have servants at his command, but if he was acting in the private capacity of a secret disciple, who was there to help him? Who so suitable as Nicodemus, whose case so closely resembled his own? We need not wonder that tradition came to associate the two.

2. If Joseph was a disciple, it might seem strange to one imperfectly instructed in Jewish customs that he took no trouble to anoint the body. That he omitted this elementary sign of respect is clear from the fact that the women came on the first day to supply the omission. The earlier gospels imply that there was no time before the Sabbath began. But to the writer of the fourth gospel no such explanation would suffice, and he represents Joseph and Nicodemus as giving to the sacred body the most elaborate burial. Nearly a hundredweight of myrrh and aloes was not too much to express their loving devotion. St. John says nothing about the purpose of the women in visiting the sepulchre!

3. The grave was new, of course, and it was situated in a garden, that is, in a private place, and not merely in the side of some rocky cliff. Of the events which followed there must be no unprivileged spectators.

Do the elaborations of the fourth gospel represent more than the natural and inevitable growth of tradition? There seems no reason to suppose that they rest upon any independent information. If Joseph was a disciple, as the first evangelist had already inferred, he must have had assistance, and he must have done his utmost to express his reverence for the body of the Lord; the details would soon be supplied by pious imagination. And yet how different is the final picture, as we have it in John, from the early narrative of Mark! In Mark, Joseph, a member of the Sanhedrim, acts alone; in John, Joseph, a secret disciple, acts with another secret follower, Nicodemus. In Mark, his motive is explained by the ceremonial requirements of the Law; in John, he is moved by devotion to Jesus, and only the choice of the sepulchre is influenced by the nearness of the Sabbath. In Mark, there is no anointing, only a hasty wrapping in newly-bought linen. In Mark, the tomb is a cave hewn in the face of the rock, and nothing is said as to its ownership or position; in John, it is a new sepulchre wherein no man was ever yet laid, situated in a garden near by. In Mark, the tomb is sealed by a stone rolled against the door; in John, it is closed with a flat stone laid over the entrance.[1] In almost every particular the details are different, and yet in every case it is easy to see how the difference is due to the natural development of tradition. If we have to choose between the earlier and later accounts, there cannot be a moment's doubt as to which is to be preferred.

[1] John xx. 1. *καὶ βλέπει τὸν λίθον ἠρμένον ἐκ τοῦ μνημείου.*

The accounts of Matthew and Luke plainly represent an intermediate stage. Matthew represents Joseph as a disciple, but knows nothing of his having anointed the body; that was a further inference which as yet had not been drawn. Both Matthew and Luke state that the tomb was new, but neither mentions the garden. Luke has perhaps already misunderstood the nature of the tomb, and Matthew has already assumed that it was Joseph's private property.

The Women who Watched

Matthew xxvii. 61	Mark xv. 47	Luke xxiii. 55, 56
And there was there Mary the Magdalene, and the other Mary, sitting over against the tomb.	And Mary the Magdalene and Mary the (mother) of Joses beheld where he was laid.	And the women which had come with him out of Galilee followed after and saw the tomb, and how his body was laid. And they returned and prepared spices and ointments. And on the sabbath they rested according to the commandment.

Why Matthew alters Mark at all we cannot say, for his statement is less precise. He is vague as to the identity of the second woman, and he does not state precisely that they saw where Jesus was laid. The phrase 'sitting over against the tomb' may represent a genuine reminiscence. It is strange that Luke should here omit the women's names and add them as an afterthought in verse 10. This is one of those passages which (*pace* Canon Streeter) seem to suggest an earlier edition of Mark which was not so precise in a few details as the present text.

Of course the passage must be considered in connection with many others in which similar phenomena are presented.[1]

The essential facts are not affected. Certain women disciples, no doubt Galileans, who had not followed the men into hiding, saw the burial of the body of the Lord. The fourth gospel, which brings Mary Magdalene and other women to the foot of the cross, makes no mention of them here.

The First Day of the Week

We now pass to the examination of the narratives which describe the visit of the women to the tomb.

Matthew xxviii. 1	Mark xvi. 1	Luke xxiv. 1
And late on the sabbath as it was dawning towards the first day of the week Mary the Magdalene and the other Mary came TO BEHOLD THE SEPULCHRE.	And when the sabbath was past Mary the Magdalene, and Mary the (mother) of James, and Salome bought spices that they might come and anoint him. And very early on the first day of the week they come to the tomb, the sun being risen. And they were saying to themselves, Who will roll away for us the stone from the door of the tomb ?	And on the first day of the week very early they came to the tomb (*μνῆμα*) bearing the spices which they prepared.

[1] Streeter, *The Four Gospels*, ch. xi.

Matthew xxviii. 2	Mark xvi. 4	Luke xxiv. 2
And behold there was a great earthquake. For an angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled away the stone, and sat upon it.	And looking up they observe that the stone has been rolled away for it was very great.[1]	And they found the stone rolled away from the tomb (*μνημεῖον*).

We are at once struck by the fact that the divergence of Matthew and Luke from Mark is very much greater than in the narrative of the burial.

1. Again the names of the women are only partially reproduced by Matthew, and not at all by Luke.

2. Matthew alters Mark's 'very early on the first day of the week' (*λίαν πρωὶ τῇ μιᾷ τῶν σαββάτων*) into the difficult 'late on the sabbath as it was dawning to the first day of the week' (*ὀψὲ δὲ σαββάτων τῇ ἐπιφωσκούσῃ εἰς μίαν σαββάτων*).

3. Mark's 'very early' (*λίαν πρωί*) should mean a time not later than 4 a.m., but if 'the sun being risen' (*ἀνατείλαντος τοῦ ἡλίου*) is part of the original text, the former phrase must be taken to refer to a time some two hours later.

4. Mark represents the women as buying the spices on Saturday evening, when the sabbath was past. Luke supposes that they prepared their spices immediately after the crucifixion, and the Western Text of Mark, by omitting 'when the sabbath was past,' perhaps supports this view.[2]

5. It is very surprising that Mark names the women

[1] How much more easily *ἦν γὰρ μέγας σφόδρα* reads if the previous clause be omitted (*vide* p. 133 note).

[2] There is something to be said for the reading of D. There is an unnatural sound in the use of *σάββατον* in two different senses in succeeding verses, and *λίαν πρωί* seems to begin a new paragraph.

differently in xv. 47 and in xvi. 1. Whether or not 'Mary of Joses' is the same as 'Mary of James,' the change seems to indicate a different source.

6. Matthew, having represented Joseph as a disciple, does not wish to call attention to his omission to anoint the body of the Lord; he therefore represents the Magdalene and 'the other Mary' as coming 'to gaze upon the tomb,' and says nothing about their bringing spices. The omission may also be explained by the inclusion of the account of the guard, which would make such a service impossible.

7. Luke is very brief and wastes no words. The women came 'at early dawn' bringing the spices, and they found the stone rolled away from the tomb.

Is there anything here to indicate that Matthew or Luke had an independent source of information? If not, how can we account for their divergences from Mark? Something may be allowed for a desire to compress the Marcan narrative: Luke tells in twenty-three words what Mark recounts in sixty, and Matthew only uses nineteen words to describe the arrival of the women, though he goes on to give an account of the earthquake and of the angel who rolled away the stone. Luke's omission here of the names of the women may have been accidental, and Matthew naturally repeats the names as he has already given them. There is no sign of an independent source.

The difficulty is to account for the curious alteration of Mark's note about the time of the visit. According to Mark, the sabbath intervened before the women did anything, then, when the sabbath was past (i.e. after 6 p.m. on Saturday evening), they bought their spices and made preparation to complete the hasty burial of Friday afternoon. Very early on Sunday, 'at sunrise,' they hurried

to the tomb, debating as they went who would roll away the stone. That seems clear enough, but it is just possible that a reader who did not understand perfectly the Jewish method of reckoning days would find it perplexing. 'When the Sabbath was past' might suggest the early hours of Sunday morning, a time at which it would scarcely be possible to buy spices. If Luke made that mistake, we can understand why he represented the women as making ready spices and myrrh on the Friday afternoon immediately after the burial. If the Sabbath did not begin until Saturday morning, they would have plenty of time. There remained nothing more to relate save the visit of the women at early dawn on Sunday and their discovery that the stone had been rolled away. Luke omits to mention the women's perplexity, probably because he thought the detail unimportant; the point was that the tomb had been opened. This is a fair summary of Mark's account, told in the fewest possible words, and there is no evidence that Luke had any information beyond that which he derived from the earlier narrative.

It is not quite so easy to explain the genesis of Matthew's version. On the Jewish reckoning of time, how could an hour when the first day of the week was just dawning be described as 'late on the sabbath'?

The first evangelist began by paraphrasing Mark's 'when the sabbath was past' by 'late on the sabbath'; then, wishing to omit all reference to the action of the women in repairing the neglect of Joseph, he passed straight on to the events of Sunday morning, and paraphrased 'very early on the first day of the week' by the phrase 'when it was dawning towards the first day of the week.' He forgot to erase the words he had already written. So Mark's account of two events, the buying

of the spices on Saturday evening and the visit to the tomb on Sunday morning, was telescoped in the first gospel to make one event described as taking place at two different times.[1]

The Arrival at the Tomb

Matthew xxviii. 2	Mark xvi. 4	Luke xxiv. 2
And behold there was a great earthquake for an angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled away the stone, and sat upon it.	And looking up they observe that the stone has been rolled back, for it was very great.	And they found the stone rolled away from the tomb.
	And entering into the tomb (or coming to the tomb)	And entering in they found not the body [of the Lord Jesus].
And his appearance was as lightning, and his raiment was white as snow.	they saw a young man sitting on the right, clothed in a white robe,	And it came to pass as they were at a loss about this, behold TWO MEN stood by them in glistening raiment.
And for fear of him the watchers were shaken and became as dead men.	And they were amazed.	And as they were affrighted, and bowed down their faces to the ground,
And answering the angel said to the women, Fear not ye; for I know that ye seek Jesus who hath been crucified.	And he saith unto them, Be not amazed: Ye seek Jesus the Nazarene, who hath been crucified:	they said unto them, Why seek ye the living with the dead?

[1] See the author's note on the meaning of *ἐπιφώσκειν* in the *Journal of Theological Studies* (vol. xxvii. No. 106).

Matthew xxviii. 6	Mark xvi. 6	Luke xxiv. 6
He is not here; for he is risen, as he said. Come, see the place where he lay.	he is risen, he is not here; behold the place where they laid him.	[He is not here but is risen.] Remember how he spake unto you while he was yet in Galilee, saying that the Son of Man must be delivered up into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and the third day rise again.

Mark has no explanation to offer of the fact that the stone was rolled back, but this is just the kind of opportunity of which Christian imagination would be sure to avail itself. An angel was present at the tomb, it was a natural inference that he had moved the stone, and it is not in any way surprising that one of our early accounts states definitely that he did so. The author of Matthew was probably not the first to draw the natural inference; he knew the common belief, and a very slight manipulation of the Marcan narrative enabled him to insert it. It suited his purpose to enlarge upon the part played by the angel. He had included in his narrative of the burial the story of the guard, and he must give some account of the effect upon them of the resurrection. It was not fitting that the soldiers should be the only witnesses of the actual emergence of the Lord from the tomb, so they are disposed of by the angel. 'From fear of him the watchers were shaken and became as dead men.' It is surely unnecessary to enquire what was Matthew's special source; these are details which imagination—his own or that of others—would quickly provide; they are the early embellishments of Mark's simple story

combined with the tradition of the setting of a guard.[1]

We may now consider other points of interest which appear in a comparison of the three synoptic accounts.

1. Mark's description of the angel is brief and restrained. 'Entering into the tomb,[2] they saw a young man seated on the right clothed in a white robe; and they were amazed.' It is not definitely stated that he was an angel, and although the idea is suggested by his white garment and by the amazement which his appearance created, the interpretation that 'the young man' was a young man and no more is not altogether excluded. Matthew, however, has no doubt about it: 'His appearance was as lightning and his raiment as white as snow.' Luke has two angels: 'Behold two men stood in glistening apparel,' and before them the frightened women cast their eyes to the ground. Matthew's account may be no more than a developed version of Mark, but what are we to say of Luke's? It is quite clear that for some reason Luke here deserted the Marcan source and followed another tradition. Whereas in Mark the women come to the tomb and see at once a young man sitting, in Luke apparently they find the tomb empty, for the words 'they found not the body' suggest a search. Suddenly (*καὶ ἰδού*) two men stand by them in flashing raiment, obviously angels. Whence St. Luke derived his information we do not know, and speculation is useless; but it is clear that his source was not Mark, and the details cannot be reconciled with the earlier narrative. The tradition which he follows may have

[1] The Gospel of Peter shows the process carried further (Gospel of Peter ix).

[2] Or 'coming to the tomb.'

been influenced by the account which appears in Matthew, or the two may have a common source; 'in glistening raiment' (ἐν ἐσθῆτι ἀστραπτούσῃ) is faintly reminiscent of Matthew's 'his appearance was as lightning' (ἦν δὲ ἡ εἰδέα ὡς ἀστραπή).

2. The divergence of Luke in his report of the angelic message is equally striking. In Mark the young man reassures the women with the words, 'Be not amazed: ye seek Jesus, the Nazarene, which hath been crucified: he is risen: he is not here.' Matthew has substantially the same words, 'Be not ye afraid, I know that ye seek Jesus who hath been crucified. He is not here, for he is risen, as he said. Come, see the place where he lay.' The novel points here are the stress laid on the supernatural knowledge of the angel and the fulfilment by the resurrection of the prophecy of Jesus. But Luke's account is altogether different. The women are rebuked for their fruitless search: 'Why seek ye the living among the dead?'[1] They should have remembered his assurance, 'Remember how he spake unto you while he was yet in Galilee, saying that the Son of man must be delivered up into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and the third day rise again.' Here it is legitimate to see a further development of the tradition embodied in Matthew. The opportunity of representing the crucifixion and resurrection as anticipated in the teaching of Jesus was tempting, so Matthew adds 'even as he said.' Luke incorporates the tradition at a later stage in its growth when the plain assertion of the young man that Jesus was risen has given place to an insistence upon the dullness of the women in not remembering the words of

[1] A reminiscence of Isa. viii. 19. Transcriptural probability is strongly against the words which follow in the Neutral Text—οὐκ ἔστιν ὧδε, ἀλλὰ ἠγέρθη.

Jesus. It is not difficult to trace the stages in the evolution of the Lucan account. First the simple belief in the resurrection. Then the belief that Christ had prophesied his rising from the dead. Then surprise that the event was not anticipated by his friends. Finally a rebuke expressive of that surprise put into the mouth of the angels.[1] Whatever may be thought of the relative dates of the first and third gospels, it seems clear that in this passage Luke embodies tradition at a later stage of evolution than that which appears in Matthew.[2] It is to be remarked that the angels' words do not follow closely any prophecy recorded in the third gospel; it is Matthew who mentions crucifixion (xx. 19), though Luke has the general sense in ix. 22 and 44.

3. Luke has no words to correspond with Mark's rather curious 'Behold the place where they laid him.' If the women were in the tomb and the tomb was obviously empty, the invitation seems unnecessary, unless the young man wished to point out the particular *loculus* in which the body had been placed. Even so, the words, taken in their accepted sense, seem hardly worth recording. Matthew makes the situation clearer: the angel is outside the tomb, seated on the stone, and his words are an invitation to the women to enter and satisfy themselves that the body is no longer in its resting-place.

The Instructions to the Women

The variations in the records of the angel's final words to the women are considerable and important.

[1] Cf. Luke xxiv. 25. There, however, the rebuke is on account of the disciples' failure to understand the prophets.

[2] It is not forgotten that a tradition may have developed more rapidly in one church than in another, and the communities for which the first and third gospels were written may have been widely separated.

MATTHEW xxviii. 7	MARK xvi. 7
And go quickly, and say to his disciples	But go, say to his disciples AND TO PETER
that he is risen from the dead, and behold he goeth before you into Galilee :	that he goeth before you into Galilee :
there ye shall see him.	there ye shall see him
Behold I have told you.	even as he said unto you.

Luke's words have been quoted already. The obvious difference between him and the first two gospels is that he omits all reference to appearances in Galilee; the prophecy of the resurrection was uttered in Galilee, but there is no hint of an instruction from the angels to the disciples that they should travel to Galilee to meet the risen Lord. The rest of the chapter makes it clear that Luke regarded Jerusalem and its neighbourhood as the scene of the Lord's appearances. We can well understand Luke's treatment of Mark. He was acquainted with narratives of the appearances in Judæa; his copy of Mark ended at verse 8; it was better to make the necessary modifications in the earlier verses of Mark than to sacrifice the valuable material which was not consistent with them. So he boldly paraphrased the angels' words.

In Mark the purpose of the angel is simply to direct the disciples to Galilee in order that they may meet the risen Lord who 'goes before them,' as he said he would (xiv. 28). Matthew only adds 'quickly,' and completes the message with a definite statement of the resurrection. He has not included the prophecy of Mark xiv. 28, and he has written 'even as he said' in verse 5, so he changes the final sentence into 'Behold, I have told you.' It is clear that both evangelists regarded the instruction to proceed to Galilee as urgent; neither can have accepted a tradition which represented the disciples as staying in Jerusalem to await the appearance of the Lord. Of

Mark's 'and to Peter' we can only say that it probably prepared the way for the account of an appearance to Peter such as that mentioned by St. Paul. Matthew, being unacquainted with any such tradition, did not see why Peter should be specially mentioned, and omitted the words.

It only remains to compare the several accounts of the action of the women.

MATTHEW xxviii. 8	MARK xvi. 8	LUKE xxiv. 8
And going away quickly from the tomb	And going out they fled from the tomb,	And they remembered his words, and returning [from the tomb]
with fear and great joy,	for trembling and astonishment had come upon them.	
they ran to tell his disciples. [*There follows an account of an appearance of Jesus to the women, and of the report of the guard.*]	And they said nothing to any man, for they feared . . .	they told all these things to the eleven and to all the rest. And they were Mary Magdalene and Joanna, and Mary the (mother) of James. And the other women with them told these things to the apostles. And these words seemed in their sight as silly talk, and they disbelieved the women. [But Peter arose and ran to the tomb; and peering in he seeth the linen clothes only: And he went away home wondering at what was come to pass.]

As usual, Mark's account is perfectly clear and the meaning unmistakable. The women, seized with terror, rushed out of the tomb, and, being thoroughly frightened by their experience, kept silence as to the whole incident. They said nothing to any man. We can only speculate as to the intended conclusion. If 'and to Peter' is any indication of the author's intention, he went on to describe an appearance to Peter, and probably to the other disciples, in Galilee. Then perhaps the women, hearing Peter's news, gathered enough courage to relate the events in which they had been concerned; but it is clear that Mark did not intend to represent the report of the women as the original source of the faith in the resurrection. Eventually they must have recounted their experiences, but it was not until some other event had occurred which helped them to overcome their terror and astonishment. Matthew differs entirely. He knows of a tradition that the women had actually seen the Lord—in all probability an independent development of the original report that they had met 'a young man.' So he inserts it in the only possible connection, and describes an appearance to the women as they returned from the tomb; but the message of the risen Lord is nothing more than a repetition of the words already spoken by the angel—a clear indication that the incident is a doublet of that already recorded. To Matthew it was incredible that the women could keep silence as to their great discovery, so, ascribing to them the obvious emotions, he records their prompt delivery of the message. We have no reason to suppose that Matthew is following a superior tradition. The silence of the frightened women is not really difficult to understand, particularly if the meaning of their experience was less obvious than it appears in the later accounts; but to Christians holding the belief in the resurrection

as it had taken shape a few years later, their reticence would appear incomprehensible, and the last words of Mark, leading as they did to no conclusion, would soon be revised. Neither Matthew nor Luke pays any regard to them. But the improbability of the women's silence from the point of view of later belief creates a strong probability that Mark's account is historical; only as fiction is it incredible.

Luke gives here, instead of at the beginning of his narrative, the names of the women. He writes the name of the Magdalene in an unusual order,[1] omits Mark's 'Salome,' and inserts the name of Joanna, only mentioned elsewhere in Luke viii. 3. The names of the Lord's women friends were preserved in early Christian tradition, but none of them, except Mary Magdalene, seems to have impressed her personality on the memory of the Church. It must be admitted that verse 10 comes awkwardly in the narrative, and Luke's account would run more smoothly without it. There is no textual evidence against it, but we may suspect that the author, realizing that he had not mentioned the names of any of the women, made an insertion here in his manuscript. Having inserted the three names—probably from memory, without turning back to Mark xv. 40—he realized that he could not continue 'and these words seemed in their sight as silly talk' without giving a false impression, so he added a somewhat lame sentence to make it clear that it was the apostles, not the women, who were sceptical. The final result is that the apostles are said to have been twice informed, once by the women on their return from the sepulchre, and again by the rest (*αἱ λοιπαί*) who were with them. The textual variants testify to the

[1] *ἡ Μαγδαληνὴ Μαρία.*

difficulty which later scribes felt in understanding the author's meaning. The 'Western non-interpolation,' which records Peter's visit to the tomb, is surely no part of the original text, but rather a later addition summarizing the tradition underlying John xx. 3–10.

We may now sum up the testimony of the synoptists as to the visit of the women to the tomb. Mark states that three women came very early on Sunday morning to anoint the body of Jesus. To their surprise they found the tomb open, and, entering in,[1] they saw a young man dressed in white, who told them that Jesus was not there; he had risen; and the young man pointed to the place where he had lain. From him they received a message to the disciples commanding them to depart into Galilee, where they would see the risen Lord. The women, frightened and astonished, ran home and held their peace.

Matthew reproduces Mark's narrative, only introducing such modifications as were required by his acceptance of the stories of the guard at the tomb and of an appearance to the women. Their silence he finds incredible and frankly contradicts. He adds also certain details natural on the assumption that Mark's 'young man' was an angel responsible for the removal of the stone.

Luke has a quantity of other information, and in order to introduce it he deserts the narrative of Mark with which his other material is inconsistent, and re-writes the story with some freedom. There are two angels,[2] who

[1] The textual variant ἐλθοῦσαι warns us that in an earlier form of the story, the conversation with the young man may have taken place outside the tomb, as in Matthew.

[2] Jewish thought tended to regard 'two angels' as the proper embassy for God to send (Lake, *op. cit.*, pp. 67, 185). It is not likely that Luke would himself have made this change; we have here clear evidence of a non-Marcan tradition on which Luke is relying.

rebuke their lack of understanding in seeking the living among the dead. The angels only mention Galilee in connection with the Lord's prophecy of his death and resurrection, and no message is sent to the disciples. Of their own accord the women publish the account of their experiences, and their story is met with complete scepticism.

To what extent Luke is here relying upon tradition independent of Mark, or to what extent he is himself re-writing Mark in order to make way for his later narrative, it is difficult to say. The question is not important. Either he or others who accepted the 'Jerusalem tradition' deliberately altered the account which is embodied in Mark and Matthew, but the fact of the doubling of the angel seems to suggest that the change had been made in Jewish circles before Luke received his material. This much is plain: Luke did not consider Mark's written gospel which lay before him to possess such authority that he might not properly contradict its statements if it suited his plan to do so. And yet he relied upon Mark for a great part of the material for his gospel.

The Fourth Gospel

We may now turn to the fourth gospel and consider what light, if any, it can throw upon the origin and development of the narrative concerning the women.

John xx. 1.

And on the first day of the week Mary the Magdalene cometh early while it is yet dark to the tomb, and she seeth the stone taken away from the tomb. She runneth then and cometh to Simon Peter and to the other disciple whom Jesus loved, and saith unto them, They have taken away

the Lord from the tomb, and we know not where they have laid him.

The following points are noteworthy :—

1. John has recounted the elaborate burial by Joseph and Nicodemus, so that he makes no mention of the purpose of the women in coming to the tomb. He does not even suggest, as Matthew does, that they came to gaze upon the tomb. No reason is given for the visit.
2. Mary the mother of James the Less and Salome and Joanna have disappeared, only the Magdalene is mentioned. The other women, having failed to interest the Church, are now forgotten.[1]
3. The note of time is roughly equivalent to Mark's 'very early,' but it is definitely stated to have been yet dark (contrast Mark, 'the sun having risen').
4. As yet the woman's only discovery is that the stone is removed from the mouth of the tomb. She does not enter, nor does she see an angel, but she infers that the body is gone.
5. It would appear that the author misconceives the character of a Jewish tomb ; *ἠρμένον ἐκ τοῦ μνημείου* can only mean that a flat stone had been lifted up from a hole in the ground.
6. She needs no encouragement to communicate her discovery: she runs straight to Peter with her news. Her message, however, is not that Jesus has risen, but that the tomb is unexpectedly open and that the body has been stolen. The subject of *ἦραν* is presumably the Jews.
7. The author knows nothing of a watch set to guard the tomb.

[1] *οἴδαμεν* in verse 2 represents a survival of earlier tradition.

John xx. 3.

Peter therefore went forth, and the other disciple, and they went toward the tomb. And they ran both together: and the other disciple outran Peter, and came first to the tomb; and peering in he seeth the linen cloths lying; yet entered he not in. Simon Peter therefore also cometh, following him, and he went into the tomb. And he beholdeth the linen cloths lying, and the napkin that was upon his head, not lying with the linen cloths but rolled up in a place by itself. Then entered in therefore the other disciple also, which came first to the tomb, and he saw and believed. For as yet they knew not the scripture that he must rise again from the dead. So the disciples went away again unto their own home.

At first sight this account seems almost entirely independent of the Marcan tradition. John makes no mention of the appearance of the angel to the women, though it is the central feature of all the earlier accounts, but he recounts in detail a visit of the disciples to the tomb of which the synoptists are wholly ignorant.[1] The picture which the fourth evangelist desires to present is clearly drawn. Peter and the Beloved Disciple hurry to the tomb under the impression that the body has been stolen. The Beloved Disciple, arriving first, peers into the tomb,[2] and sees the grave clothes lying on the floor. Then comes Peter, who goes boldly in. He makes a careful survey of the position of the grave clothes, and notices that the napkin which had been wrapped about the head is not moved or unwound in any way, but twisted up so as to imply a miracle in the removal of the head. The Beloved Disciple then enters, sees, and 'believes.' What

[1] Luke xxiv. 12 may be rejected as no part of Luke's work.

[2] The most natural meaning of *παρακύψας* is that the disciple had to stoop to look into a grave dug in the ground, but it might possibly mean that he peeped round the entrance of a cave.

he believes is not stated. πιστεύω is used in the fourth gospel to express the acceptance of the Christian faith, and this may be the meaning here. In the time in which the author lived the acceptance of Christianity was so intimately connected with a belief in the resurrection as a historical fact that he unconsciously identified the two. Or the word may only mean that the Beloved Disciple is now convinced that Jesus has risen from the dead, and this interpretation is supported by the next sentence, 'For as yet they knew not the scripture that he must needs rise from the dead.' Without further delay the disciples return home. The points which the author seems to wish to bring out are two:

1. It was the two disciples, and not a woman, who first learnt the fact of the resurrection.

2. The evidence which convinced them was the condition of the tomb, which they both entered, and of which they made a thorough examination.

It is obvious that the account, taken as a whole, cannot be reconciled with the accounts of Matthew and Luke, from which it differs in almost every particular. If Mary (among others) was already convinced of the resurrection, her errand to Peter would have a totally different significance, and their visit to the tomb would have a different purpose. Mark does not make it quite clear that anyone entered the tomb, and Matthew implies that the conversation, with its perfectly definite announcement by the angel, came first; only Luke lays any emphasis on the internal condition of the tomb ('they found not the body'), and all the synoptists attribute to the announcement by the angel the first realization of the great news. In John, the angel has disappeared from the scene, and in consequence the impression left upon the reader's mind

is wholly different.[1] If John's account is historical, Matthew and Luke are valueless, whilst the account in Mark is, to say the least, inaccurate and incomplete.

John xx. 11.

But Mary was standing without at the tomb weeping: so as she wept, she stooped and looked into the tomb; and she beholdeth two angels in white sitting, one at the head and one at the feet where the body of Jesus had lain. And they say unto her, Woman, why weepest thou? She saith unto them, They have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid him. When she had thus said she turned herself back, and beholdeth Jesus standing, and knew not that it was Jesus. Jesus saith unto her, Woman, why weepest thou? whom seekest thou? She, supposing him to be the gardener, saith unto him, Sir, if thou hast borne him hence, tell me where thou hast laid him, and I will take him away. Jesus saith unto her, Mary. She turneth herself and saith unto him, Rabboni; which is to say, Master. Jesus saith to her, Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to the Father: but go unto my brethren, and say to them, I ascend unto my Father and your Father, and my God and your God. Mary the Magdalene cometh and telleth the disciples, I have seen the Lord; and how that he had said these things unto her.

This part of John's narrative is reminiscent of the synoptic story, and yet strangely different. Mary returned to the tomb after Peter and the other disciple had left, but she stood without weeping. Like the Beloved Disciple, she peered down into the tomb, but, unlike him, she saw a startling vision: two angels were sitting where the body of Jesus had lain. We are reminded of the two angels

[1] It is noteworthy that John is not so far removed from Mark as he is from Matthew and Luke. Mark does not say that the women left the tomb joyful and triumphant at the realization of the fact of the resurrection, 'for trembling and amazement had seized them' is nearer to John's description of Mary's dismay than it is to Matthew's 'going away with fear and great joy.'

of Luke, who were also discovered in the tomb. But their words are altogether different: 'Woman, why weepest thou?' The angels have no function, no real part in the scene; they simply ask an unnecessary question and receive an obvious reply. But immediately another revelation follows. Mary turns from the angels and sees Jesus, whom she fails to recognize, though by now the sun must have risen. Jesus again asks the reason for her grief, and she, mistaking him for the gardener, appeals to him to help her in finding the lost body of her Lord. There follow the recognition, the command 'Touch me not,'[1] with the implication that the ascension is imminent, and the message to 'my brethren.' With these last words of Jesus must be compared the message which, according to Mark, the young man entrusted to the women. Both were addressed to the apostles, but they have nothing else in common. Mark speaks of an appearance in Galilee, John of the coming ascension; it was unnecessary after the vision of the two disciples to announce the resurrection. There is no resemblance between Luke's version of the angels' words and the message recorded by John.

We must now consider the question of the historical value of the Johannine narrative. If it depends upon the personal reminiscences of the Beloved Disciple, it must be allowed to be in the main historical, and the earlier narratives in so far as they are inconsistent with it must be rejected as legendary. Few critics would be disposed to accept such a conclusion.

1. The value of the Johannine narrative must be judged in relation to the character of the book as a whole. This is not the place to enter into a discussion of the historical

[1] The narrative is parallel to the account of Matthew xxviii. 8–9, though the words of Jesus are wholly different.

value of the fourth gospel, but the criticism of the last half-century has made it clear that the theory that the gospel is in any immediate sense the work of one of the twelve can only be accepted with extreme caution. Moreover, whoever wrote the book, the author's purpose was quite certainly not the provision of a literal historical narrative.

2. On any theory of authorship, it must be admitted that the fourth gospel is many years later than the second, and we can only prefer a later narrative to an earlier one if the reasons for doing so are strong and compelling.

3. We have been recently warned against any attempt to trace the sources of the Johannine narrative,[1] but it is not impossible to detect the genesis of some part of the account which John gives of the discovery of the empty tomb. The fact of Mary's visit he derived from the synoptists, or at least from the traditions incorporated in the first three gospels. But he was bound to omit the purpose of her visit as given by Mark, and he wished to leave the realization of the significance of the empty tomb for the disciples. So there could be no angelic message, and it was the simplest plan to postpone the appearance of the angels to a later point, and leave to Mary no more than the discovery that the body of Jesus was gone. Here the author of the fourth gospel may have had more than imagination to help him. As we have seen, in the earliest account of Mark it is by no means clear that the women realized the fact of the resurrection, and we are expressly told that they did not make any announcement. John's account may go back to an even earlier stage in the growth of the tradition than that represented by Mark, though as he presents it the early narrative has undergone an independent development. Omit one word, 'he is

[1] Streeter (*op. cit.*, p. 377 ff.).

risen' (ἠγέρθη), from Mark's narrative, and the young man's announcement amounts to no more than a statement that the body of Jesus was not in the tomb. That, according to John, is the sum of the information gleaned by Mary Magdalene. It is perhaps significant that a prophecy of the ascension takes the place of the announcement of a coming appearance in Galilee. We shall see reason for supposing that in the earliest tradition the 'ascension' took place in Galilee.

John knew a tradition of an angelic appearance, so he sought another place to insert an account of it. If the angels were in the tomb, we should have expected the disciples to see them, and the most natural place for a description of their appearance would have been at the point of the arrival of one or both of the disciples. But John knew that tradition spoke of an angelic appearance *to Mary*, so he had no choice but to postpone the event still further, and to bring Mary back to the tomb after the disciples had left. The arrangement was not ideal, for it left the angels nothing to say, but, unless John was prepared to abandon the very ancient belief in an angelic appearance to Mary, it is difficult to see what else he could have done.

The cause of the whole difficulty is the desire to represent the disciples, and not the women, as the first evangelists of the resurrection. Either John or the tradition on which he relied made the deliberate attempt to substitute the disciples for the women. It is easy to see why. Once published, the belief in the empty tomb became the chief evidence of the resurrection; to simple minds it would provide the clearest possible proof, altogether superior to stories of appearances in which the witnesses might be mistaken. But critics of the gospel would be quick to ask on what evidence the assertion

that the tomb was empty rested. The Christians replied that it was guaranteed by the testimony of three women. Would the critics be convinced? We know how Celsus in the next century sneered at the evidence of 'a half-frantic woman,'[1] and the ancient world set little store by the testimony of women. It would be a strong temptation to the Christians to add the weight of male testimony. Peter was known to have had something to do with the early faith in the resurrection,[2] can we wonder if in some circles it came to be believed that Peter had visited the tomb?[3] Even so, that was not enough. Two or three witnesses was the requirement of the law, surely he did not go alone. John sends him to the sepulchre accompanied by the Beloved Disciple.

There remains the question of the source of John's narrative of an appearance of Jesus to Mary. It is beautifully and simply told, and did we not know that it had no place in the earlier tradition represented by Mark and Luke, we should be strongly inclined to accept it as in the main historical. But the silence of two of the synoptists is a serious difficulty. It is true that Matthew knows vaguely a similar tradition, but few critics would attach much weight to Matt. xxviii. 9, 10. In the first gospel Jesus meets the women as they go to deliver their message, and Mary falls at his feet; but the words of Jesus are no more than a repetition of the message of the angel and the whole incident is pointless. John's account differs in every detail. There is only one woman, Mary, and she is standing by the tomb. She is weeping, not full of joyful tidings. The words of Jesus are altogether different.

Can we find any hint in the synoptists of an earlier

[1] Origen, *Contra Celsum* ii. 55. [2] 1 Cor. xv. 5, Mark xvi. 7. [3] Luke xxiv. 12.

tradition of which John's account could be regarded as a development ?

Once more we return to the fragmentary narrative of Mark. The women come to the tomb and meet a young man who is unidentified, only we are told that he wore a white robe. Mark may have regarded him as an angel, but there is no indication that this interpretation was an integral part of the story as first told. The original narrator, if he (or she ?) had meant to describe an angel, would have made his meaning clear and not been content with the term 'a young man.' If the story was first told by one of the women, as it must have been if it is historical, there can be no doubt that she was quite uncertain as to the identity of the man whom they met at the tomb. Those who heard the story would begin immediately to speculate. He might have been simply a young man who for some reason was abroad at this very early hour, or he might have been an angel, or he might have been Jesus himself. St. John provides a hint that some gave the first explanation—Mary supposed him to be the gardener ; he himself follows the third line on which tradition might develop, and represents Mary as meeting the Lord himself, though at the same time the fourth gospel shows that it has been influenced by the second explanation by also including a story of angels. Luke knows only the explanation by angels ; but Matthew, like John, is influenced by both traditions—the man at the tomb was an angel, but later the women met Jesus by the way. Matthew's account is almost the exact opposite of John's. According to Matthew, the being at the tomb was an angel and the appearance of Jesus is introduced by an artificial device ; according to John, it was Jesus who stood by the tomb, and the angels are introduced by an artifice. Neither the appearance of Jesus in Matthew, nor the appearance of the angels in

John, has any real place in the narrative. In Matthew, Jesus repeats the words of the angels; in John, the angels anticipate the words of Jesus; both interpositions are pointless and the narratives would be better without them. Can we doubt that both the accounts are developments representing various interpretations of the simple tradition contained in Mark? No new facts are contributed by any of the later evangelists; there is no evidence that they had access to sources of historical value inaccessible to Mark.

If it be objected that so free a development of tradition is incredible, and that in the fifty years following the crucifixion there were too many persons living who had been witnesses of the events recorded to make it possible for legendary developments to gain currency, we may reply that it is necessary to bear in mind the general situation and the mentality of the age. The three women and their friends in Jerusalem were only a small company who in a few weeks would be scattered far and wide; the story which they told (when they told it) would be understood in the light of beliefs derived from other sources; for years it would pass from mouth to mouth, in widely separated communities, among many who had never seen or spoken to an apostle; communications were irregular; there was no critical spirit, but, on the contrary, a natural love of the miraculous and an unconscious tendency to interpret and exaggerate tradition. The wonder is not that stories grew, but that it is still possible to trace any connection between earlier and later versions. If Mark represents correctly the mental state of the women, it is very unlikely that their narrative was clear and unambiguous, or indeed that they felt very sure in their own minds what they had seen and heard; other exciting news was soon available, in a few weeks everyone would have his own account of

what had happened, and the women themselves would hardly know which version was the most accurate. In sixty years anything might have been believed. We have only to read the apocryphal gospel of Peter to see to what lengths credulity could go among some not altogether uneducated Christians, and by comparison the restraint and moderation of the canonical accounts is very striking.

Finally, it may be remarked that it is incumbent upon those who dislike the idea of the development of tradition to provide some alternative explanation of the facts. No ingenuity can make the narrative of Luke consistent with that of Mark, much less is it possible to reconcile the picture presented by the fourth evangelist with the accounts of any of the synoptic writers. Mutually contradictory narratives cannot all be true, and unless we are to abandon ourselves to a confession of complete uncertainty, we must endeavour to discover how the growth of one or other of the narratives can be explained. If it be true that almost every detail in the narratives of Matthew, Luke, and John, can be explained by reference to the earlier narrative of Mark enlarged and modified in the inevitable development of tradition, but without the addition of independent historical information, then we can claim to have taken the first step necessary in an attempt to discover what are the facts behind the various narratives. Nothing can be made of a jumble of contradictory statements.

CHAPTER III

THE APPEARANCES

WE must now proceed to examine the other narratives, contained in the Gospels and the Acts, which describe appearances of the risen Lord.

It is immediately clear that the various books in the New Testament incorporate two lines of tradition: according to the one Jesus appeared to some of his disciples in Galilee, according to the other his appearances took place in the neighbourhood of Jerusalem. The Galilean tradition is contained in our oldest gospel, that of St. Mark, though Mark's account unfortunately breaks off after the incident of the women visiting the tomb, and we do not know what appearances in Galilee he intended to relate. Matthew also follows the Galilean tradition, so that we may next examine his brief narrative.

Matthew xxviii. 16.

But the eleven disciples went into Galilee unto the mountain where Jesus appointed them. And when they saw him they worshipped, but some doubted. And Jesus came to them and spake unto them, saying, All authority hath been given unto me in heaven and on earth. Go ye therefore, and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I commanded you: and lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world.

The writer seems to wish to convey the impression that the eleven disciples journeyed in a body to Galilee. It has been objected that according to Mark the disciples were already scattered (Mark xiv. 27 and 52, combined with the absence of any reference to them at the crucifixion). The objection appears hypercritical. Mark xiv. 27 is a quotation, and we need not suppose that it was fulfilled to the extent of scattering the disciples beyond Jerusalem. It is far more likely that the eleven, though more or less in hiding, kept in touch with one another for a few days; and we do not need, in order to explain the silence of the women, to suppose that the disciples had left Jerusalem. There seems nothing unnatural in the supposition that soon after the crucifixion the disciples who had travelled together so long agreed to return in company to Galilee, whether they had received a message from the women or not.

Matthew is altogether vague in regard to time and place. Various efforts have been made to identify the mountain 'where Jesus appointed them.' Probably τὸ ὄρος means no more than the hill country of Galilee, and the 'appointment' has reference simply to verse 7: 'Lo, he goeth before you into Galilee and there ye shall see him.' The description of the appearance is very brief, 'Seeing him they worshipped, but some doubted.' The natural meaning of 'doubted' is that some were not sure of his identity at first, a fact to be explained perhaps by the distance from which he first became visible. In the next verse we are told that Jesus 'came to them.'

We need not here discuss in detail the command which Matthew obviously regards as the final words of the risen Lord to his disciples. It resembles in some particulars the commands recorded in Mark xvi. 15 f.,

Luke xxiv. 47, 48, John xx. 21, and Acts i. 8. It is often said that it is too late in tone to be historical, and there is some doubt about the text of verse 19,[1] but the argument is purely subjective, and it depends upon unproved assumptions as to the development of Christology. Neither here nor anywhere else in the gospels can we be perfectly certain that we have the exact words of Jesus, but we have no reason to reject the whole narrative as unhistorical because Jesus is represented as speaking 'in terms of post-Pauline theology.' If the author knew a tradition that Jesus appeared to his disciples and gave them a commission to preach or baptize in his name, he would have no hesitation in putting appropriate words into his mouth.

Interesting questions do arise as to the intention of Jesus to found a Church and his expectation of an interval 'until the end of the world' (ἕως τῆς συντελείας τοῦ αἰῶνος), but it is not within the scope of this present work to enter into a discussion of such matters. Here it is only necessary to say that Matthew plainly regards this as the first and last appearance of Jesus to his disciples.[2]

On the mountain in Galilee the predictions of the angel (xxviii. 7) and of the Lord himself (xxviii. 10) were fulfilled, and from that time the Church began its labours

[1] Eusebius several times quotes these words as 'make disciples of all nations in my name.' We know from Acts that baptism into the name of Christ was the primitive custom, so that there is some reason for the suggestion that the text of Matthew in all existing MSS. has been altered in accordance with later ecclesiastical practice. But it is strange that the text shows no disturbance, and it is simpler to suppose that Eusebius was quoting loosely and from memory. His version is a very natural abbreviation of the existing text. We do not know the date of the Gospel of Matthew, nor when the primitive baptismal formula was first expanded.

[2] Except that to the women of xxviii. 8 ff.

in his name. 'Behold I am with you all the days' is Matthew's equivalent to the gift of the Spirit recorded by Luke and John: possibly 'baptizing them' is the equivalent of John xx. 23. 'Whose soever sins ye forgive they are forgiven unto them; whose soever ye retain they are retained.'

It has often been maintained that in writing this account of the appearance in Galilee, Matthew had before him the lost ending of Mark, and that we have here the substance of the missing page. The argument in favour of this view is briefly that Matthew has followed Mark very closely up to the point where the present text of Mark ends, therefore it is reasonable to suppose that he continued to rely upon his main source beyond the point up to which we can check his method. At first sight the argument is attractive, but it is doubtful whether it will bear much weight. Matthew has deliberately altered the closing words of the present text of Mark, so that it may be inferred that he did not end his gospel as Mark intended to finish his. As we have seen, Mark xvi. 7 probably implies that the author knew of an appearance to Peter which he intended to relate before ending his gospel, Matthew omits the words 'and to Peter' and gives no description of any incident in which Peter was specially prominent, he also omits 'and they said nothing to any man.' It seems likely, therefore, that he was not following the lost ending of Mark, either because he did not know it, or because he did not trust the information which it gave. The former alternative is the more probable, for Matthew is not as a rule critical of Mark. Those critics who believe that Mark represents the eleven as scattering to their homes immediately after the arrest of Jesus have an additional reason for rejecting the theory that Matthew embodies Mark's lost verses.

The only other New Testament writer who betrays any knowledge of a Galilee tradition is St. John, but much of his account belongs to a much later stratum of New Testament tradition, and it is convenient to postpone consideration of it until we have examined the narrative of St. Luke.

The Lucan Narrative

Luke follows his account of the women's visit to the tomb with the remarkable story of the appearance to two disciples on the road to Emmaus (xxiv. 13–33). For the most part the story is plain and straightforward, and there is no need to transcribe the text. On the third day after the crucifixion, two of the apostles [1] were walking out to Emmaus, a village some sixty furlongs from Jerusalem. As they went, Jesus drew near, but their eyes were holden so that they knew him not. He questioned them as to their earnest conversation, and was told that they had been sadly discussing the unexpected death of Jesus of Nazareth. They were puzzled also at the report of certain women concerning a fruitless search for his body and a vision of angels, and they affirmed that others of his disciples had confirmed the report of the empty tomb. Then Jesus rebuked the dullness of their understanding, and, beginning from Moses and all the prophets, interpreted to them in all the scriptures the passages relating to himself. Arrived at the village, they persuaded him to stay with them, and in the breaking of bread they recognized the risen Lord. He vanished, but they hastened back to Jerusalem,

[1] If verse 12 be no part of the true text, *αὐτῶν* in verse 13 probably refers back to *ἀποστόλους* in verse 10; Cleopas was not strictly an apostle, so that there is some reason to suppose that his companion was one of the eleven. But Luke's traditions are fragmentary.

where they found the eleven gathered together and received from them the report of the Lord's resurrection and of his appearance to Simon.

No one can fail to be struck by the beautiful simplicity of the narrative and the literary skill with which it is presented. St. Luke secures just the right atmosphere to suggest the mystery of the resurrection. Though the critic must needs dissect the story and examine its features in detail, yet something must be allowed for the impression which is created by the whole that here Luke is relating vividly but with restraint an actual historical occurrence.

A number of points call for discussion.

1. Least important is the identity of the village. Later tradition pointed to the city of Emmaus, not far from Joppa. Since this place was some forty miles from Jerusalem, the identification is absurd, and we must suppose that a village much nearer Jerusalem is intended. Josephus mentions another Emmaus[1] about thirty furlongs distant which is much more likely to be the place. St. Luke doubles the distance, but he may have misunderstood his information that it was sixty furlongs there and back. A walk of four miles is more probable than one of eight.

2. Who were the two? Verse 18 names one Cleopas, presumably the same as Clopas mentioned in John xix. 25 as the husband of one of the Marys who stood by the Cross.[2] Of the other we know nothing unless we can infer from verse 34 that his name was Simon: 'They found the eleven gathered together and those with them, saying that the Lord is risen indeed and hath appeared unto Simon' (*εὗρον ἠθροισμένους τοὺς ἕνδεκα καὶ τοὺς σὺν αὐτοῖς, λέγοντας ὅτι ὄντως ἠγέρθη ὁ κύριος καὶ ὤφθη*

[1] Josephus, B.J. vii. 6, 6 (Encyc. Bib. 1289).
[2] See, however, H.D.B., Art. Alphæus.

Σίμωνι). So read Westcott and Hort with the great majority of the MSS. But D has *λέγοντες*, and if that is correct it must mean that *the two disciples* reported that the Lord was risen and had appeared to Simon. Origen identifies the second disciple as Simon, so it is argued that he must have had the Western reading. Against the reading of D it may be urged—

(*a*) If Luke knew that the disciple was Simon why did he not say so? The natural inference is that he had only heard the name of one of the two.

(*b*) The phrase 'he appeared unto Simon' is a strange way for the two disciples to announce an experience which both had shared.

(*c*) It seems more generally probable that verse 34 reflects a genuine reminiscence of the appearance to Peter which is mentioned by St. Paul and anticipated in Mark xvi. 7. If it be objected that so careful and skilful a writer as St. Luke would not have left a reference to an appearance to Peter hanging in the air without any explanation, we can only reply that Luke may have been conscious of the fact that his information was incomplete, and having those words in his source he did not feel justified in altering them.

Apparently Luke had only the vaguest idea as to the identity of the two disciples; he had heard that one was called Cleopas, but he probably knew nothing about him, and of the other disciple he did not even know the name.

3. Nor did he know the reason for their walk to Emmaus. If they had special business there they seem to have neglected it. They were not paying a visit to friends, for the evening meal was apparently private. The most natural explanation is that one of them, or possibly both, lived at Emmaus, and that they conducted

Jesus to their own home. Possibly this is an example of the 'scattering' alluded to by Mark.

4. The women are stated by the two to have related their experiences very much as they are recorded in this gospel, but the news had produced only perplexity in the minds of the disciples. They are still brooding sadly on the disappointment of their hopes that Jesus would have brought deliverance to Israel.

5. Cleopas affirms that the report of the women had been confirmed by 'certain of those with us,' but Jesus they had not seen. The inclusion of this verse in spite of the fact that Luke had not related any visit of the disciples to the tomb,[1] may be compared with his mention of the appearance to Simon in verse 34. Both are indications of the fragmentary and confused state of tradition at the time the gospel was composed. Something like the story related in John xx. 3–10 must have been in existence when Luke wrote, but he did not know the details, and perhaps omitted to mention it intentionally as inconsistent with his own narrative of the visit of the women.

6. There is nothing to suggest legendary embellishment in the account of the conversation of the disciples with the Lord. The inability of two men wholly absorbed in the discussion of a single topic to understand how another dweller in Jerusalem could require information as to the subject of their conversation is true to life, and a romancer would hardly have been bold enough to invent the petulant tone of Cleopas' question. The description of Jesus of Nazareth 'which was a prophet (ἐγένετο ἀνὴρ προφήτης) mighty in deed and word before God and all the people,' has a very primitive sound;[2] and so has

[1] Rejecting verse 12. In any case Peter could hardly be described as τινες τῶν σὺν ἡμῖν.

[2] Compare Acts ii. 22.

the phrase 'We were hoping that it was he that should redeem Israel.' [1]

7. The author was specially concerned to lay emphasis on the fulfilment of prophecy in the crucifixion and resurrection of Christ. In verse 6 the angels remind the women of the Lord's own words, and in this narrative the purpose of the appearance seems to be less to convince the disciples of the fact of the resurrection than to help them to understand it as part of the age-long purpose of God. 'Was it not necessary that Christ should suffer these things and enter into his glory?' There is not a trace of Pauline theology; the passage simply provides the earliest explanation of the mystery of the death of Christ by insisting that it was in accordance with prophecy. It is very much the point of view we find illustrated so often in the first gospel and in the speeches recorded in the early chapters of Acts, but it is not characteristic of the third gospel taken as a whole, a fact which seems to suggest that Luke derived this narrative from a source other than those upon which he chiefly relied in writing the gospel.

8. There can be little doubt that the author conceived the evening meal to have been a eucharist: the words 'he took,' 'he brake,' 'he gave' could not fail to recall xxii. 19. Thus at the first celebration of the eucharist after the crucifixion the Lord himself presided, but nothing is said of his partaking of the food.

9. The only historical difficulty which is at all serious concerns the time of the meal. The disciples constrained the Lord to abide with them because it was towards evening and already the day was far spent (κέκλικεν ἤδη ἡ ἡμέρα). Such an expression seems to imply that it was already nearly dark. There followed the meal

[1] Compare Acts i. 6.

and an hour's walk back to Jerusalem where their experiences had to be related. Luke then relates the appearance to the eleven, the walk out towards Bethany, and the final departure of Jesus from them—all taking place on the same evening. It is not altogether impossible that the final separation took place late at night, but it was certainly not the idea embodied in the later account of Acts, and it is more likely that we have another indication of the fragmentary nature of the traditions on which Luke relied. We shall return to this point.

10. It seems better to read λέγοντας in verse 34, but if λέγοντες is preferred then it is probable that the tradition is here confused. It is hardly possible that the words 'The Lord is risen indeed and hath appeared unto Simon' can originally have been a description of the experiences of the two at Emmaus. Lake suggests[1] that the words may be a reminiscence of the report of certain disciples returning to Jerusalem after a visit to Galilee, where they first learnt the news of the resurrection and of an appearance to Simon. We should rather modify this suggestion, and retaining λέγοντας suppose that it originally referred to a statement of the eleven made to the two at a later time.[2]

The Appearance to the Eleven

Luke xxiv. 36–49.

And while they were thus speaking he stood in the midst of them [and saith unto them, Peace be unto you]. But they being terrified and affrighted thought that they beheld a spirit. And he said to them, Why are ye troubled? and why do questionings arise in your heart? Behold my hands and my feet that it is I myself: feel me and see, for a spirit hath not flesh and bones as ye behold me having. [And saying this he showed them his hands and his feet.] And

[1] Lake, *op. cit.*, p. 102. [2] *Vide infra*, p. 160 ff.

while they yet disbelieved for joy and marvelled he said to them, Have ye here anything to eat? And they gave to him a portion of broiled fish. And he took it and did eat before them.

And he said unto them, These are my words which I spake to you while I was yet with you, that all things written in the law of Moses and in the prophets and psalms about me must be fulfilled. Then he opened their mind to understand the scriptures, and he said to them, Thus it is written that the Christ should suffer, and rise from the dead on the third day, and repentance for the remission of sins should be preached in his name unto all nations, beginning from Jerusalem. You are witnesses of these things. And, behold, I send forth the promise of my Father upon you. But do ye stay in the city until ye be clothed with power from on high.

1. There are some textual variations, but none are of any great importance for our present purpose. The two 'Western non-interpolations' are probably no part of the original text, the first having crept in under the influence of the fourth gospel (xx. 19–26), and the second being a marginal note.

2. The narrative is clearly parallel to John's account of the appearance in the closed room (xx. 19–23), but it is worth while to note the differences between the two accounts. Luke represents the eleven as gathered together in company with sundry others (verse 33 *καὶ τοὺς σὺν αὐτοῖς*); John gives the impression that the meeting of the disciples was strictly private, and Thomas was absent. Luke says nothing about the doors being shut. Luke represents the eleven as startled and affrighted; John says that they were afraid *of the Jews*, but after they had been convinced of Jesus' identity they rejoiced.

In Luke the purpose of the Lord appears threefold: (*a*) to convince the frightened apostles that he was not a disembodied spirit, but his own self; (*b*) to emphasize

the fact that his death and resurrection were in accordance with Old Testament prophecy; (*c*) to give the disciples their commission for which they would be specially equipped with power from on high.

John has something to correspond with (*a*) and (*c*), 'He showed them his hands and his side,' and 'As the Father hath sent me, even so send I you.' But whereas in Luke there is only a promise of power from on high, in John 'He breathed on them and saith unto them, Receive a holy spirit.' The mention of repentance for the remission of sins, becomes in John a declaration 'Whose soever sins ye forgive they are forgiven them, and whose soever ye retain they are retained.'

There can be no doubt, however, that the third and fourth gospels are describing the same scene, and the differences are not greater than we should expect in two accounts written in different localities at different dates.

3. More difficult to explain are the resemblances between this narrative of Luke, and Matthew xxviii 16–20. Here place and time are different, and the only points of resemblance are the doubt of the disciples and the commission given to them. The latter point is important, because it creates a strong probability that despite all differences the two accounts are really descriptions of the same event. Matthew regards the scene on the mountain-top as the final scene in the Lord's earthly life, and Luke regards the appearance in Jerusalem on the Sunday evening as the last appearance before 'he was parted from them.' Both believe that on this last occasion he gave instructions as to the future. Both cannot be right, and we shall have to compare the relative values of the Galilee and Jerusalem traditions. Matthew is unsupported, John agrees in essentials with Luke. This, however, does not mean that the balance of probability

is in favour of Luke by two to one, because John and Luke may have been, and probably were, using the same tradition at different stages of its growth, and Matthew probably had the support of Mark. We can only say that it was commonly believed that the Lord, after the resurrection, gave some instructions to the disciples about their future work; Matthew knowing, or at least adopting, an exclusively Galilean tradition, had no choice but to put this instruction into the mouth of Jesus in Galilee, and Luke, who followed an exclusively Judean tradition, was similarly constrained to represent Jesus as instructing his disciples in Jerusalem. The chief point is that the two accounts are not supplementary but alternative.

4. It may be remarked that on this very point Luke is a little confused.

xxiv. 46 ff.

And he said unto them that thus it is written that the Christ should suffer and rise from the dead on the third day, and that repentance unto the remission of sins should be preached in his name unto all the nations—beginning from Jerusalem. Ye are witnesses of these things. And behold, I send forth the promise of my Father upon you.

It can hardly be supposed that Luke means that prophecy had determined that repentance should be preached in Christ's name to all nations *beginning from Jerusalem.* Not even first-century exegisis could find all that in Moses and the prophets and the psalms. Surely Luke has in mind a definite command to the disciples to preach repentance to all nations[1] beginning from Jerusalem, but wishing to avoid any suggestion that they should leave the city before the fulfilment of the promise of the Spirit, he combines the commandment with the prophecy and makes it appear that the scriptures and not the Lord had given

[1] Cf. Matt. xxviii. 19.

to the Church its 'marching orders.' This may not have been what he intended, but it suggests that Luke did not find his sources altogether consistent with one another, or with the general view which he wished to present.

5. It is commonly said that this passage illustrates Luke's great desire to combat Docetism, and that he alone represents the disciples as touching the risen Lord [1] in order to make it quite clear that the resurrection body was a real body. Certainly that is the intention of the passage, but it can hardly be called anti-docetic. Docetism was a theory that Christ never assumed a real body, here the only question is whether Jesus in appearing to his disciples after the resurrection appeared with a body of solid flesh or clothed with a semi-material 'spiritual' form. It seems extremely probable that Luke knew of some who held this latter view, and that he thought them mistaken. If such people existed could they have known the story of the empty tomb? The idea of a ghostly appearance would be most unnatural to those who believed that the actual body had been raised from the tomb.

It is dangerous to expect too great a degree of consistency in a matter of this kind, but there is some evidence that two alternative theories were held in different circles. The one understood the resurrection to mean the raising of the body of Jesus from the tomb, and insisted (*a*) upon the fact that the tomb was empty, (*b*) that the body seen by the disciples was a body of solid flesh, capable of absorbing food and of being handled. The other theory regarded the resurrection as implying primarily the continued existence of Jesus after death,

[1] Thomas in John xx. 27 is invited to put his fingers into the print of the nails, but we do not read that he did so. Elsewhere the author of this gospel considers it improper for the resurrection body to be touched (xx. 17).

and thought of him as a spirit, difficult to recognize, not to be touched, able to appear and disappear in a moment and to pass through closed doors.[1] In the gospels the two theories are intermingled, but we may say that the former lies behind the accounts in Matthew and Luke of the visit of the women to the sepulchre and inspires this narrative of Luke's, while the latter is more consistent with Matt. xxviii. 16 ff., Luke xxiv. 13 ff., John xx. 11 ff.[2] In the fourth gospel the two theories are combined in a more developed conception of a transmuted material body which is the old body gone from the tomb (xx. 7) and capable of being handled (xx. 25), but strangely endowed with immaterial properties, so that it can escape from the grave clothes without unwinding them, and pass through doors without unlocking them. The development of such a theory was certain, but in the synoptic gospels it is incomplete.

6. The passage Luke xxiv. 36–49 seems to belong to the same circle of tradition as the preceding section describing the walk to Emmaus. Again we notice the strong emphasis upon the fulfilment of prophecy in which Luke in the earlier part of the gospel does not appear particularly interested. It seems reasonable to suppose that Luke has taken these sections from some source, written or oral, which was specially concerned with the argument from prophecy. Such a source would probably be of Jewish, not of Gentile composition, though it is noticeable that here no definite quotations are given,

[1] Compare Vergil, Æneid vi. 700 :

Ter conatus ibi collo dare bracchia circum,
Ter frustra conprensa manus effugit imago,
Par levibus ventis volucrique simillima somno.

[2] It is possible that we should add the narratives of the Transfiguration and of Christ walking on the water, which look very like resurrection appearances.

after the manner of Matthew. If it was Jewish, it is interesting to note that the world-wide mission of the Church is so clearly recognized (46–49).

The Ascension

Luke xxiv. 50 ff.

And he led them out until they were over against Bethany, and lifting up his hands he blessed them. And it came to pass as he blessed them he was parted from them [and carried up into Heaven]. And they [worshipped him and] returned to Jerusalem with great joy; and they were continually in the temple blessing God.

It is too much to say that Luke certainly regards this event as taking place on the same evening as the appearance just related, but it can hardly be denied that such is the natural explanation of his arrangement. Nothing is said of another appearance, and we must not be misled by the paragraphing of the Greek or English text into supposing that there is any break in the narrative. On the other hand, if it is admitted that Luke was piecing together disconnected fragments of tradition, it may be granted that juxtaposition without any note of time does not necessarily imply that the author assumed immediate sequence. Luke believed that a final separation had taken place, but he had no information as to the date of the occurrence. So he stated the fact when he had exhausted his other material, and did not invent a date which he did not know. The impression his narrative creates is that the separation took place on the first day of the week, but it is just possible that the impression is accidental.

Nothing could be briefer than the narrative. Somewhere near Bethany, whither Jesus had led his disciples, he blessed them and left them, and they returned joy-

fully to Jerusalem. That a feeling very soon grew that this was an inadequate account of the ascension is indicated by the two 'Western non-interpolations,' but there can be no doubt that they do not belong to the true text. At the time of writing the Gospel, Luke did not know any details of the departure of Jesus from his disciples, the tradition with which he was acquainted contained only what he writes. The chief point of interest is the exact meaning of the words 'parted from' (διέστη). It is a vague term expressing division from, standing apart from, separation. No motion is necessarily implied, the idea is simply that there was a gulf between the Lord and his disciples whereby they understood that bodily intercourse was over; so they returned to Jerusalem. The interpolations are expressive of a different conception; 'he was carried up into heaven'; then it was natural enough that they should 'worship' this heavenly Being; but it is not Luke's picture.

This, however, is the picture presented in Acts.

Acts i. 6 ff.

Coming together, therefore, they asked him saying, Lord, dost thou at this time restore the Kingdom to Israel? He said to them, It is not yours to know times or seasons which the Father put in his own authority; but ye shall receive power when the Holy Spirit is come upon you, and ye shall be my witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judæa and Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth. And having said these things, as they were looking, he was taken up, and a cloud received him out of their sight. And while they were stedfastly looking into heaven as he went, behold two men stood by them in white raiment, who also said, Ye Galileans, why do ye stand looking into heaven? This Jesus who was taken up from you into heaven shall so come in like manner as ye beheld him going into heaven.

If, as we believe, the same author who wrote the gospel wrote Acts, some explanation is required of the

remarkable difference between this account and that which we have just studied. According to verse 3, forty days have elapsed since the resurrection.[1] The subject still uppermost in the mind of the disciples is the restoration of the Kingdom to Israel (cf. Luke xxiv. 21), and the answer they receive is that times and seasons are not for them to know. There is no suggestion that their general ideas on the subject of the Kingdom need revision, indeed the angels in verse 11 confirm them in their belief. The coming of the messianic kingdom was not an idea specially interesting to Gentiles, so that here again we have reason to think that Luke is drawing on a Jewish collection of material. How far it embodies genuine historical reminiscence is a question upon which opinions will differ, but a candid examination is not very favourable to the narrative. The following points must be borne in mind:

1. The story was unknown to Luke at the time he wrote the gospel, for it is most unlikely that he would have shortened it to the extent necessary to produce the narrative of Luke xxiv. 50–53.

2. Matthew certainly did not know of it, for he represents the final separation as taking place in Galilee.

3. John embodies in his gospel a reference to the ascension (xx. 17), but he gives no account, and he betrays no knowledge of the details as related in Acts.

4. St. Paul regarded Jesus as dwelling in heaven, but his writings make no reference to the ascension as an historical event which took place at a definite time, and

[1] The mention of the forty days is in connection with the appearances, there is nothing in the actual narrative of the ascension to imply a date. There is some suggestion in verse 6 that Luke has rearranged his material: *οἱ μὲν οὖν συνελθόντες* does not follow naturally on verse 5. If so, Luke's source for the second ascension narrative may not have contained any note of time.

it is probable that he identified the resurrection with the ascension.

5. The scene is one which it is almost impossible to visualize. Unless a miraculous cloud floated just above the disciples' heads, as generally depicted in Christian art, the thought of the Lord's body levitated to the clouds is hardly tolerable.

6. It is not difficult to imagine the process by which such a story, even though unhistorical, would gain currency. When the belief was established that the body of the Lord had been raised from the tomb, the problem would immediately arise as to what became of it. The early Church had no doubt that the Lord was a heavenly Being, and to simple folk that would mean that he dwelt in a local heaven somewhere up in the skies. Then obviously his resuscitated body must have been carried up into the sky, and the early narrative of his 'parting from' the disciples only needed a few touches to make it a description of the ascension. It is fairly clear that we have in the New Testament all the stages in the growth of the belief; (*a*) Luke's original account, (*b*) Luke's account touched up by the interpolator who added 'and was carried up into heaven,' and (*c*) the fully developed story of the ascension as described in Acts i. If Luke wrote both the gospel and the Acts, it is specially interesting to note that the same writer could give two accounts representing two stages in the growth of one story.

7. The mention of the two angels does not inspire confidence in the historicity of the narrative of Acts. Legend would be almost certain to supply these 'men in white apparel' since it was but fitting that the ascension should be attended by the same witnesses who had been present at the resurrection. Their message is one more

indication of the absorption of the early Church in hopes of a speedy parousia, and if we conclude that their appearance here is legendary, we shall be the more cautious in assuming that all the eschatological sayings ascribed to Jesus in the gospels were actually spoken by him. If Christian imagination could invent spokesmen to express its cherished hopes, it is quite certain that it would be equal to the task of inventing sayings to put into the mouth of the Master. There is no question of bad faith. Unconsciously men who are obsessed with certain beliefs ascribe the expression of those beliefs to others whose authority they revere. Legends do not only grow among dishonest people, they grow in all ages, in all countries, among all classes. Naturally their genesis is more rapid among the uneducated and the uncritical, and yet how quickly stories gather round some well-known figure even in the rarefied atmosphere of a university town!

CHAPTER IV

THE JOHANNINE ACCOUNT

WE now approach the account of the appearances of the risen Lord contained in the fourth gospel.

The first appearance to Mary by the tomb has already been considered; there remain the appearance on the evening of the first day of the week, the appearance a week later, and the appearance by the sea of Tiberias narrated in chapter xxi.

It is not necessary in this place to enter into a discussion of the problem of the date and authorship of this gospel. It is the belief of the present writer that the book was written at Ephesus about the beginning of the second century by some unknown disciple, that his purpose was theological rather than historical, but that he had a special source in the circle of tradition which had grown around the presbyter John and which embodied some genuine historical reminiscences.[1] If so, we cannot allow that any particular statement in the fourth gospel comes to us with the decisive authority of an eye-witness, but we must always be prepared to admit that it may embody a reminiscence which, without this gospel, we should have lost. Nevertheless, it seems unwise, in view of what we have seen of the rapid growth of tradition, to desert the general principle that an early

[1] See the excellent discussion contained in Streeter, *The Four Gospels*, chs. xiii, xiv, xv, xvi.

account is more likely to be correct than a later one, and where John contradicts the narrative of Mark, the earlier narrative is generally to be preferred.

To begin, then, with John's narrative of the appearance of Jesus on the first evening.

xx. 19 ff.

And when it was evening on that day, being the first day of the week, the doors having been shut where the disciples were, for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood in the midst, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you. And having said this he shewed them his hands and his side. The disciples, therefore, rejoiced when they saw the Lord. He said therefore to them again, Peace be unto you! as the Father hath sent me, I also send you. And having said this he breathed on them and saith to them, Receive a holy spirit; whose soever sins ye forgive they are forgiven them, and whose soever ye retain they are retained.

As we have already remarked, there can be no doubt that this is an independent description of the scene described in Luke xxiv. 36–49, the chief difference being in the conversation, which Luke presents as concerned with the fulfilment of Old Testament prophecy. The following points in the Johannine narrative are noteworthy.

1. The miraculous character of the appearance is heightened by the addition of the words 'the doors being shut.' The statement is by no means out of keeping with Mark's picture of the terror-stricken disciples, and the shutting of the doors is not intrinsically improbable. Jesus had been arrested and executed as a traitor, might not his friends be arrested as fellow-conspirators? The immediate danger came from the priests who had secured the condemnation of Jesus, but here as usual John ignores distinctions within the Jewish people, the enemies are 'the Jews.'

2. John agrees with Luke that the Lord drew attention

to his hands, though the fourth gospel has 'side' for 'feet.' The purpose of the exhibition is not clear in Luke. In xxiv. 39*b* the object is to disprove the idea of the disciples that they saw a spirit, in xxiv. 39*a*, as in John, it is to establish the identity of Jesus. That the gospels should give different explanations of the same action suggests that the tradition of the fact may be older than either explanation. An early narrative affirmed that Jesus shewed his wounds to the disciples; in a development of tradition with which Luke was familiar this was explained as a proof that the appearance of Jesus was corporeal; but in other circles this explanation was unknown, and John thought of the action as having quite another intention.

3. The somewhat unnatural repetition of 'Peace be unto you' may perhaps imply that John inserted the shewing of the hands and side in a narrative which did not contain it, but read 'And he saith unto them, Peace be unto you, as the Father hath sent me, I too send you.' The author wished to insert an account of the shewing of the hands and side. Obviously it should come before the commission to the disciples, but 'Peace be unto you' being the usual greeting should come first. So he solved the difficulty by putting the words into the text twice, the first time because that was the proper place, and the second time because they stood in his source immediately before 'even as the Father hath sent me.' The point is not important except as providing some indication that the fourth evangelist, like the first and third, worked from sources which were written, or at least fixed in form.

4. The commission of Jesus to the disciples is much briefer and less definite than that in Matt. xxviii, or than that form which underlies Luke xxiv. 47–49. Like Luke,

John connects the gift of the Spirit with the commission, but he is either ignorant of or rejects the belief that a period must elapse before the giving of the Spirit. 'And having said this he breathed (on them) and saith unto them, Receive a holy spirit; whose soever sins ye remit they are remitted, and whose soever ye retain they are retained.' The connection of thought can hardly be mistaken. In the early Church the remission of sins was almost always associated with baptism, and some there were who doubted whether any other remission was possible.[1] The apostles are here commissioned to grant or refuse remission of sins, that is, to grant or withhold the privilege of baptism. It is in keeping with what we know of early Christian mission preaching to suppose that its aim was to secure candidates for baptism,[2] so that here we have in other words the exact equivalent of the commission recorded in the first gospel. The early Church was evidently vague as to the place, time, and form in which the Lord had commanded it to undertake missionary work, but it had no doubt that such a command had been given.[3]

Only the fourth gospel makes any mention of a second appearance of Jesus to the disciples at Jerusalem.

xx. 24–29.

But Thomas, one of the twelve, called Didymus, was not with them when Jesus came. So the disciples said unto

[1] Heb. vi. 4 ff., Hermas, *Shepherd*, V. ii. 2, M. iv. 3, etc.

[2] Acts ii. 38, ix. 18, xvi. 33, but St. Paul does not seem to have held strongly the common view (1 Cor. i. 17).

[3] The sayings in Matthew about binding in earth and heaven (xvi. 19, xviii. 18), have probably no reference to the remission of sins. The favourite ecclesiastical interpretation of John xx. 23, that Jesus was here committing to the priesthood authority to give absolution rests upon a total failure to enter into the mind of the early Church.

him, We have seen the Lord. But he said unto them, Unless I see in his hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and put my hand into his side, I will in no wise believe.

And after eight days again the disciples were within and Thomas with them. Jesus cometh, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, Peace be unto you. Then saith he to Thomas, Bring hither thy finger and see my hands, and bring hither thy hand and put it into my side, and be not unbelieving, but believing. Thomas answered and said unto him, My Lord and my God! Jesus saith unto him, Because thou hast seen me hast thou believed? Blessed are they who saw not and yet believed.

There is very little to be said about the manner in which the evangelist narrates this third appearance. This is the third time that the fourth gospel has made special mention of Thomas, whose name only appears in the other gospels coupled with that of Matthew in the lists of the twelve; possibly Thomas had in later years some connection with the churches of Asia, but we know nothing about him. Here no hint is given to explain his absence on the occasion of the Lord's earlier appearance.

The most important question that arises in connection with this passage concerns the writer's conception of the ascension. It has been argued [1] that since the Lord in speaking to Mary forbade her to touch him because he was not yet ascended, whereas in this passage he invites Thomas to touch his hands and his side, therefore the earlier condition has been removed and the ascension is regarded as having taken place. The argument would be more convincing if it were not for the probability that John is not, at least in this part of the gospel, writing his book as a free and original composition in

[1] K. Lake, *op. cit.*, p. 136.

which consistency might be expected, but is combining, with some freedom, independent traditions which were anything but consistent. We know that the appearance to the women—or a woman—was traditional long before John wrote his gospel, and the prohibition against touching the risen Master may have belonged to the tradition in the form in which John received it. If so, he inserted it for no other reason than that he had heard it from others. The same may be true of this narrative concerning Thomas. It is not at all probable that the fourth evangelist invented it, and he may have derived it from quite a different source from that which supplied the earlier narrative. If he inserted it substantially in the form in which he had learnt it, we have no reason to expect perfect consistency between the two narratives. It is very likely that the author did not see the change in the point of view. Here the purpose of the handling is purely evidential; Thomas needed to be convinced that it really was Jesus, though it seems to be implied that he did not accept the Lord's invitation. Those who told this story may never have heard of the words to Mary, which probably belong to a circle of tradition which included an account of the ascension, and the author of the fourth gospel in narrating both incidents failed to notice, or did not care to correct, the discrepancy.

That so striking an incident as the appearance to Thomas should have left no mark on the first and third gospels or on 1 Corinthians is very remarkable. It is difficult to believe that the authors, had they known of it, would have omitted all reference to it, and it is almost equally difficult to suppose that, if the tradition had been in existence at the time they wrote, they could have failed to hear it mentioned. This was no private manifestation to one or two of the disciples which other members of

the primitive Church might not have been in a position to describe; this was an appearance to all the apostles which every one must surely have related. It would take its place in the traditions of the Church at Jerusalem, St. Paul would learn of it and recount it in the gentile churches, St. Peter would relate it at Antioch, St. Mark would tell it in Rome. Yet Matthew's account definitely excludes it, Luke also excludes it, and St. Paul does not include Thomas in his list of those to whom the risen Lord appeared. If we have any regard for the laws of historical evidence we must accept the story with reserve.

The last chapter of the fourth gospel presents a difficult problem. There can be hardly any doubt that the author of the gospel intended his work to end with the epilogue in chapter xx. 'These things are written that ye may believe that Jesus is the Christ the Son of God, and that believing ye may have life in his name.'

But if that be so, whence comes chapter xxi.? The style is Johannine, so that it would seem to be either an appendix added by the author of the whole, or a supplement written by a member of the same 'school.' Here we would merely refer the reader to the recent discussion by Streeter,[1] with his ingenious and interesting reconstruction of the history underlying the publication of the chapter.

xxi. 1 ff.

After these things Jesus shewed himself again to the disciples on the sea of Tiberias. And he shewed himself thus. There were together Simon Peter, and Thomas called Didymus, and Nathanael from Cana of Galilee, and the sons of Zebedee, and two other of his disciples. Simon Peter saith unto them, I go a-fishing. They say unto him, We too come with thee.

[1] *Op. cit.*, p. 471 ff.

They went forth and entered into the ship, and that night they caught nothing. But when early morning was come Jesus stood on the shore. The disciples, however, did not know that it was Jesus. Jesus therefore saith unto them, Children, have ye nothing to eat? They answered him, Nay. And he said unto them, Cast the net on the right side of the ship, and ye shall find. They cast therefore, and they were no longer able to drag it for the multitude of the fishes. Therefore that disciple whom Jesus loved said unto Peter, It is the Lord. Therefore Simon Peter, hearing that it was the Lord, girt about him his cloak, for he was naked, and cast himself into the sea. And the other disciples came in the boat, for they were not far from the land but about two hundred cubits, drawing the net (full) of fishes. \Therefore as they were landing they see a fire of coals laid and fish thereon and bread. Jesus saith to them, Bring of the fish which ye caught now. Simon Peter therefore dragged to the land the net full of great fishes, an hundred and fifty and three; and although there were so many the net was not torn. Jesus saith to them, Come and dine. No man of the disciples dared to ask him, Who art thou? knowing that he was the Lord. Jesus cometh and taketh the bread and giveth to them, and the fish likewise, This is now the third time that Jesus was manifested to the disciples after he was raised from the dead.

The author has material to add concerning an appearance of Jesus in Galilee, and he places it at some time subsequent to the appearance in Jerusalem already related, but he does not pretend to be exact.

The list of disciples is distinctly Johannine: Simon Peter, Thomas called Didymus, Nathanael from Cana of Galilee, the sons of Zebedee, and two others, making seven in all—the mystic number.

This chapter may in substance resemble the lost ending of Mark, but it is not likely that these names ever stood in the second gospel. Indeed, the objection to the ingenious theory that John xxi. is Mark xvi. is that there is nothing Marcan about the style or the vocabulary. It

seems much more probable that the ending of Mark and John xxi. were independent versions of a Galilean tradition.

What strikes one immediately about the first part of this chapter (1–14) is the resemblance between the narrative and the incident related in Luke v. 4–11. In both the scene is laid by the Lake of Galilee; in both the disciples have been unsuccessful in their attempt to catch fish; in both they let down the net at the express command of Jesus; in both the result is embarrassing; and in both Peter, *called in each case Simon Peter*, is prominent in the scene. Can there be any reasonable doubt that in the two passages we have two versions of the same tradition? Luke and John place the story in different settings, and they adapt the details to the circumstances, but, in spite of differences, it is most improbable that two narratives so similar in their main features describe two independent events.

The question arises whether Luke or John is nearer to primitive tradition. It is of some importance, for if John is mistaken in placing the incident after the resurrection, it may be argued that the value of his support of the Galilee tradition is considerably lessened. The problem is complicated by the further question of the relationship of Luke v. 1–11 to Mark i. 16–20. Both are accounts of the call of Simon while he is fishing, and both contain the promise that he shall in future catch men. Mark contains no account of the draught of fishes, and Luke has no other account of the call of Peter. The probability is therefore very great that the two narratives refer to the same event, and that Luke has combined with Mark's simple account of the call of Simon the tradition of the miraculous draught of fishes. In so doing he was almost certainly mistaken. But it does not follow that

because Luke was wrong therefore John was right. The story is not one which inspires confidence, and though we do not know what its origin may have been, we can hardly suppose that we have an exact historical account either in Luke or in John. Perhaps it is a dramatization of a parable concerning the catching of men for the Kingdom.[1] Some such explanation is required. If the narrative is founded on a parable and not upon a historical occurrence it can have no definite place in the history of the ministry; one evangelist might put it in here and another insert it there, but both would be wrong from a strictly historical point of view. However that may be, it does not seem to be rightly placed by John in his narrative of the appearance by the lake. Doubtless the purpose of that narrative is to relate the appearance of the risen Lord to the disciples and his recognition by Peter and the disciple whom he loved. The incident of the miraculous draught comes in awkwardly, delaying the climax and spoiling the story. The boat is quite near the beach, within speaking distance of the shore, yet it seems to be implied that the great catch is made without any launching out into the deep, the disciples cast the net into a foot or two of water, and immediately a great multitude of fishes is enclosed. The Beloved Disciple recognizes the Lord, and Peter jumps out of the boat to wade ashore. Evidently the evangelist felt the difficulty, for he added a parenthesis to the effect that they were not far from land, only about a hundred yards from the beach. But the difficulty remains. When they get to land Jesus tells them to bring the fish which they have taken, but no use is made of it, for the meal of which

[1] Cf. John's mysterious number 153—fish of every kind, men of every race and character. Cf. also the parable of the draw net—Matt. xiii. 47 ff. Thus the prophecy 'Thou shalt catch men' was fulfilled.

they partake is already prepared (verses 9, 13). In spite of the declaration of the Beloved Disciple and Peter's action, 'none of the disciples durst ask him, Who art thou? knowing that it was the Lord.'

It is not difficult to distinguish the elements in this complex narrative. The basis is an account of an appearance of Jesus to the disciples as they return from a fishing expedition. On the beach they see Jesus, and Peter plunges into the water to meet him. With this account is combined the story of the miraculous draught, and probably a third tradition concerning a mysterious meal in which the risen Lord joined with his disciples. That this third tradition did not originally form part of the first is suggested by the cutting off of the end of the story of Peter. He jumps out of the boat, but nothing is said of his getting to shore and meeting the Lord. The author becomes absorbed in the account of the invitation to the meal which he combines, not altogether successfully, with the miraculous draught, and he forgets that he has left Peter in the water.

The question in verse 5, 'Children have ye nothing to eat?' is reminiscent of Luke xxiv. 41, 'Have ye any meat here?'; the author of this chapter knew a tradition that at some time the risen Lord had asked for food, and with some ingenuity he fits it in here. But it does not combine well with the rest of the narrative.

We may attempt a provisional reconstruction of the traditions underlying the narrative as we have it.

I.

Simon Peter saith unto them, I go a-fishing. They say unto him, We too come with thee. They went out and entered into the ship. And when it was now early morning Jesus stood on the beach. The disciples, however, did not

know that it was Jesus. That disciple therefore whom Jesus loved saith unto Peter, It is the Lord. Simon Peter therefore hearing that it was the Lord girt about him his cloak, for he was naked, and threw himself into the sea. But the other disciples came in the little boat.

[Jesus meets and speaks to Peter and the others come to land.]

Jesus saith to Simon Peter, Simon son of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these ? etc.

II.

The miraculous draught, differing in no important respect from Luke v. 4 ff.[1]

III.

Jesus saith unto them, Children, have ye nothing to eat ? They answered him, No. They see a fire of coals and fish laid thereon and bread. Jesus saith unto them, Come and dine. And none of the disciples durst ask him, Who art thou ? knowing that it was the Lord. Jesus cometh and taketh the bread, and giveth them, and the fish likewise.

Here we have three perfectly clear and consistent narratives which run smoothly and present no difficulties to the imagination.

The narrative which we have distinguished as the third constituent tradition is reminiscent of Luke's account of the meal at Emmaus. In both the risen Lord presides, in neither is there an open recognition of the Lord's identity, and both are clearly intended to be understood as eucharists.[2] Is it possible that the two narratives

[1] Notice in Luke the cry of Peter, ' Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord ' (Luke v. 8). Was John the first to connect this unattached tradition with the narrative of Peter's restoration ?

[2] On the interesting question as to whether fish was often a part of the early eucharistic feast, see an article by the Master of Jesus in the *Hibbert Journal*, July 1922.

have a common source? We must not exaggerate the resemblances, or ignore the very great differences between the two accounts; but in view of the rapidity with which traditions of appearances certainly developed it is not altogether impossible that both stories have their origin in a belief that Jesus presided at a Eucharist after his resurrection, and that both the evangelists or their sources combined this primitive tradition with other traditions with which they were acquainted.

The conclusion, 'This is now the third time that Jesus was manifested to the disciples, after he was risen from the dead,' ignores the appearance to Mary. It may be editorial, though it comes strangely in the middle of the narrative, or it may belong to the third tradition which we have distinguished.

The rest of the chapter describes the solemn conversation with Simon Peter, and perhaps the earlier paragraph was chiefly intended to lead up to this. It is a strange narrative, and as we read it we feel that we do not know the circumstances which to contemporaries of the writer explained its meaning and gave it point and interest. Why did Jesus thrice question Peter? Is there any hidden meaning in the transition from ἀγαπᾶς in verses 15 and 16 to φιλεῖς in verse 17? Why is Peter here only addressed as Son of Jonas? Why is it the duty of Peter in particular to feed the lambs and the sheep? What exactly is implied in the reference to Peter's old age and death? What did the author's first readers infer from the words addressed to the Beloved Disciple? These are questions which we cannot answer with any confidence; but it seems fairly certain that, at the time the passage was written, the believers for whom it was intended were acquainted with the work and death of Peter, and were perplexed by the death, accomplished or expected, of the Beloved Disciple.

It is natural to suppose that his death was a subject of present interest at the time when this chapter was written, and Streeter's suggestion that the appendix was added by the Beloved Disciple himself to prepare the Church of Ephesus for a coming shock is one which deserves respectful consideration.[1] As to Peter, we can glean nothing save that he was a pastor rather than a missionary, that he lived to be very old, that before his death he was under some kind of restraint, and that by his death he glorified God.[2]

But these questions are remote from our present enquiry which concerns the light thrown by this latest chapter of the gospels on the traditions of the resurrection current in the early churches. Even if the author's purpose was not, primarily, to add to the evidence of the resurrection, he has as a matter of fact provided valuable testimony. He does not doubt the general correctness of the 'Jerusalem tradition' embodied in the previous chapter, but he has other information which proves it to be incomplete, and unlike Luke, who ignores the Galilee tradition, he endeavours to combine it with that which represented Jesus as appearing only in Judæa.

Whence did he derive his information? This is one of those questions which are so important and yet impossible to answer. If the fourth gospel is the work of the Beloved Disciple, then he has his own reminiscences to serve at least as a basis for his narrative. But does the apparently unhistorical character of much of his work make such a belief possible? If he was a Christian of

[1] Streeter, *op. cit.*, pp. 472 ff.

[2] The manner of death by which Peter glorified God is just the point which the passage does not make clear to us. Professor Merill, in his *Essays in Early Church History*, is justly severe on those who see in the reference to stretching out his hands a certain indication of Peter's crucifixion (p. 23 f.).

Ephesus of the second or third generation, with a great conception of the meaning of the Gospel, but few special facilities for obtaining information and no particular interest in history as such, then we can only use his work as evidence of the state of tradition at Ephesus about the close of the first century. From a critical point of view this seems the safer supposition. The author did not wish to write history as we understand it, but he used the floating historical traditions with which he was acquainted as a framework in which to place his picture of the incarnate Logos, and although we must reckon with the probability that he treated his traditions with considerable freedom, his work still remains valuable from the purely historical point of view as evidence of the traditions current at the time at which he wrote.

In this particular case the important point is his testimony to the survival of a Galilee tradition. Whatever view may be taken as to the author's methods, it is almost certain that he did not invent the following elements in his story :

1. The appearance to the eleven disciples in Galilee.
2. The fact that Jesus joined them in a meal.
3. The fact that there was a conversation in Galilee which had special reference to Peter.

We might add :

4. That a miraculous catch of fish had been made.

And—

5. That Peter had jumped out of a boat on recognizing the Lord.

These last two elements were certainly traditional, but the author may be responsible for putting them after the resurrection.

The account of the conversation with Peter he may

have elaborated in the light of later knowledge, but we can hardly doubt that he built upon a foundation of the well-known fact that the appearance in Galilee had specially concerned Peter. That Jesus leads Peter to make a triple confession of his love certainly suggests that this was originally an account of his restoration after his triple denial.

It is a matter for surprise that the fourth gospel, which has made several previous references to the ascension,[1] closes without giving any account of the event. It cannot be said that this author regards the resurrection as equivalent to the ascension, for the risen Lord declares that he is not yet ascended to the Father ; and yet even the appendix closes without any attempt to provide the natural conclusion of the narrative. If there were any question of a ' lost ending ' of this gospel all critics would agree that it contained an account of the ascension ; failing such assistance from textual criticism we must be content to leave the phenomenon unexplained. It seems unlikely that some such story as that contained in Luke had never been heard in Ephesus at the time the author wrote, but for some reason he did not care to reproduce it. Perhaps he disbelieved it, or perhaps he had nothing to add to the commonly accepted tradition, and in this as in other cases he did not wish to retell what others had sufficiently described. Perhaps ' John ' had got to the end of his roll, and the writer of the appendix, though not similarly limited for space, had only one object in view and was not concerned with the ascension.

The omission of the ascension is less difficult to explain than the omission of the institution of the eucharist at the Last Supper, but since in the latter case the omission

[1] vi. 62 ; xiv. 12, 28 ; xvi. 28 ; xx. 17.

is certainly not due to ignorance, there seems the less reason to suppose that ignorance is the explanation in the former case. If ancient tradition is right in representing John as writing to supplement the imperfect knowledge of his contemporaries, his omission to describe the ascension combined with his earlier references to it, may be taken as evidence that it was already well known to those for whose benefit he wrote. Artistically the gospel suffers by leaving Jesus still on earth while predicting his ascent into heaven, but the author is too great an artist to write for art's sake alone.

It is, of course, possible that John rejected the materialistic conceptions embodied in the narrative of Acts and understood the ascension as an event in the spiritual sphere which could not be described. But this explanation seems to savour too much of modern thought. No writer is more frankly materialistic than John in his account of the resurrection.

CHAPTER V

UNCANONICAL SOURCES

IT remains to consider those sources of information as to the resurrection which do not come to us with the authority of St. Paul or of one of the four evangelists.

And first, our attention must be directed to those verses which stand at the end of St. Mark's gospel in the English version. They are contained in the majority of MSS., though not in the best of them, but there can be no doubt that they were not written by the author of the gospel. They represent an attempt by a later hand to supply the loss which the original manuscript suffered at a very early date. Who the writer was we cannot say. That an Armenian MS. of the tenth century includes the verses as the work of Ariston does not help us very much. It is conceivable that Ariston is the same as Aristion, whom Papias mentions, and it is not inconceivable that a tenth-century scribe had come across a tradition which was founded on fact, but the probability that such is the case is not very strong. All we can say is that the longer conclusion is post-canonical, and we must judge it on its merits.

Mark xvi. 9–20.

Now when he was risen early on the first day of the week, he was manifested first to Mary Magdalene from whom he had cast out seven devils. She went and told them that had been with him as they mourned and wept. And they, when they heard that he was alive and had been seen of her, disbelieved. And after these things he was manifested in

another form to two of them as they walked on their way into the country. And they went away and told it to the rest; neither believed they them.

And afterwards he was manifested unto the eleven themselves as they sat at meat, and he upbraided them with their unbelief and hardness of heart, because they did not believe them which had seen him after he was risen. And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to the whole creation. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, but he that disbelieveth shall be condemned. And these signs shall follow them that believe; in my name they shall cast out devils, they shall speak with [new] tongues [and] they shall take up serpents [in their hands], and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall in no wise hurt them; they shall lay hands on sick persons and they shall be well.

And so the Lord [Jesus] after he had spoken unto them was taken up into heaven and sat down at the right hand of God. And they going forth preached everywhere, the Lord working with them and confirming the word with signs following.

The chief question of interest from the standpoint of the present enquiry concerns the sources used by the author of these verses. That he knew the fourth gospel is suggested by the mention of a first appearance to Mary Magdalene, but we cannot be sure that the author knew more than the existence of a tradition of which John gives another version. Presumably he does not in verse 9 refer to the occasion of the visit of the women to the tomb described in an earlier part of the chapter; like John he knows a tradition that Jesus—not an angel—appeared to Mary, but unlike John he makes no attempt to find a definite place for the occurrence in the framework of the Marcan narrative. He simply states that Jesus was manifested first to Mary Magdalene.

The next sentence does not support the theory that this writer was acquainted with the fourth gospel. In John, Mary is indeed the sole messenger to the disciples (xx. 18),

but there is no suggestion that she found them 'mourning and weeping'; [1] Peter and the Beloved Disciple had already discovered the empty tomb and 'believed.' It seems more probable that our author is relying upon an earlier form of the tradition, and is referring to the first announcement of the women on their return from the tomb. The unbelief of the disciples may be compared with Luke xxiv. 11, where it is stated that the women's testimony as to the vision of the angels was received with incredulity by the eleven and the rest. But here again it is difficult to decide whether Mark xvi. 11 implies a knowledge of the text of Luke, or only of the tradition which Luke embodies; the fact that the author goes straight on in the next verse to summarize the Lucan story of the appearance to the disciples on the road to Emmaus increases the probability that he had read the third gospel.

If so, his recollection of it was only vague, for although he records the appearance to the eleven which Luke and John place on the same night, he introduces his account with the indefinite 'afterwards,' and his report of the conversation has very little in common with that recorded in Luke xxiv. It is unnecessary to suppose that he relied upon any independent source; a later writer relying on his imagination might be expected to represent Jesus as upbraiding his disciples for unbelief, and his version of the missionary charge is in accordance with later thought. 'He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, but he that disbelieveth shall be condemned,' was doubtless the summary of many a sermon.

The reference to the 'signs' is probably derived from popular tradition, or perhaps from Acts. But the account of the ascension has more in common with the third gospel

[1] Cf. Gospel of Peter vii. and xii. Mark's *πενθοῦσι καὶ κλαίουσιν* looks like a reminiscence of Peter's *πενθοῦντες καὶ κλαίοντες*.

than with the later Lucan narrative, for although this writer makes no attempt to indicate times exactly, he does not seem to imply a considerable interval between the resurrection and the ascension. 'And so the Lord after he had spoken unto them was taken up' is most naturally understood as describing an event following immediately upon what has just been narrated.

We may conclude that the writer of these verses had nothing of value to add to the testimony of the other gospels. His account betrays no knowledge of the first gospel, but either he was slightly acquainted with the third and fourth gospels or he had heard the traditions which they embody. He represents the 'Jerusalem tradition' knowing nothing of any appearance in Galilee, but the verses read like a somewhat careless summary of commonly accepted beliefs, and as testimony to the actual facts they are not important.

The Apocryphal Gospels

More interesting than the 'longer conclusion' of Mark are the accounts of the early apocryphal gospels. Unfortunately our knowledge of them is small. A few words quoted by Jerome from the Gospel according to the Hebrews and a chapter of the Gospel of Peter are all that remain, but the latter is important.

The Gospel according to the Hebrews is a perplexing book. We know that in the latter part of the fourth century Jerome found some such work current in Palestine and thought it worth translating, but both the original and Jerome's translation have disappeared and left no trace save a few quotations in Jerome's other works. The longest describes an appearance to James:

De vir. ill. 2.

But the Lord, when he had given the linen sheet to a servant of the priest, went to James and appeared to him,

for James had sworn that he would not eat bread from that hour in which he had drunk the cup of the Lord, until he saw him rising from those that slept. . . . The Lord said, Bring ye a table and bread. . . . He took bread, and blessed and brake, and gave to James the Just, and said to him, My brother, eat thy bread, for the Son of Man has risen from them that sleep.

Knowing practically nothing of the date and origin of the book from which Jerome is quoting, we can say little of the historical value of this account. If, however, there is any foundation for St. Paul's statement that Jesus appeared to James, it would be strange if no details of the event had survived.

There is a clumsy confusion between James the Just and some other James, for the former was not present at the Last Supper; moreover, the anticipation of the resurrection ascribed to James is inconsistent with what we learn from the canonical gospels as to the attitude of the disciples; so that it is possible that the narrative is a pure invention based on 1 Cor. xv. 7. But it is worth while to notice that here again is an idea that the risen Lord took part in a meal over which he presided. There must be some reason for the persistence of this tradition.[1]

The only other quotation which Jerome makes from the Gospel according to the Hebrews has reference to the occasion of an appearance to Peter and other disciples:

De vir. ill. 16.

Touch me and see that I am not an incorporeal spirit; and immediately they touched him and believed.

This may be derived from Luke xxiv. 39, the author adding what St. Luke does not say, that the disciples

[1] Dr. Bethune-Baker once suggested that in the earliest tradition all the resurrection appearances took place at the common evening meal, and that this fact may be connected with the doctrine of the Real Presence.

accepted the invitation to handle the risen Master. That they ' believed ' is reminiscent of the fourth gospel, but in this case we do not know the context and cannot determine the exact reference.[1]

The Gospel of Peter

From these fragments of the Gospel according to the Hebrews we pass to the long and graphic description of the resurrection contained in the Gospel of Peter. It is of sufficient importance to justify a translation in full :

1. But of the Jews no man washed his hands, neither Herod nor one of his judges. And when they wished (not) to wash them, Pilate rose up. And then Herod the King commandeth the Lord to be taken away, saying to them, Whatsoever things I commanded you to do unto him, do them.

2. And there stood there Joseph, the friend of Pilate and of the Lord, and knowing that they were about to crucify him, he came to Pilate and asked for the body of the Lord for burial. And Pilate sent to Herod and asked for his body. And Herod said, Brother Pilate, even if no one had asked for him, we should have buried him, since indeed the sabbath is at hand. For it is written in the Law that the sun set not upon one that hath been put to death.

In this account the chief point of interest is the description of Joseph. As we have seen, Mark leaves his action unexplained and describes him simply as an honourable councillor. Matthew and Luke both feel that some explanation is needed, so Matthew calls him a disciple, whilst Luke describes him as a just man. The fourth gospel follows the Matthean suggestion and classes him with Nicodemus as a secret disciple. ' Peter ' bears witness to the need which was commonly felt for some explanation of the part played by Joseph, but the explanation he gives is not that of any of the other gospels. The

[1] For an account of the Gospel according to the Hebrews see H.D.B., vol. v, p. 338 ff.

author states that Joseph was the friend of Pilate and of the Lord. This is not intrinsically improbable. Pilate, unpopular as he was, presumably had some intimate acquaintances among the more prominent Jews, and although Jesus moved chiefly among the humbler classes, he may have been on good terms with one or two members of the Sanhedrim.[1] The point is, however, that Peter confirms the impression gained from Matthew and Luke that there was general uncertainty in the early Church as to the exact standing of Joseph of Arimathæa; it was not universally recognized that he acted as a disciple; at the most he was a friend and admirer of Jesus (§ 6).

Passing over the sections which describe the crucifixion, we continue the narrative of the burial:

6. And then they drew the nails out of the Lord's hands, and laid him on the ground. And all the ground shook and there was great fear. Then the sun shone out, and it was found to be the ninth hour. But the Jews rejoiced and gave his body to Joseph that he might bury it, since he had seen how many good things he did. And he took the Lord, and washed him, and wrapped him in linen, and brought him to his own tomb called Joseph's garden.

Here again 'Peter' differs in several particulars from the canonical narratives. Joseph is represented as an admirer of the good works of Jesus. The author knows the Johannine tradition that the place of burial was a garden, but he makes no mention of the elaborate burial described by John. The earthquake is placed later than in Matthew.

7. Then the Jews and the elders and the priests, seeing what evil they had done to themselves, began to lament and to say, Woe for our sins! The judgment hath drawn nigh and the end of Jerusalem. But I with my companions was grieved, and being wounded in mind we hid ourselves;

[1] Cf. Luke vii. 36 ff., where Jesus dines with Simon the Pharisee.

for we were sought by them as malefactors, and as wishing to set fire to the temple. And besides all this we fasted and sat mourning and weeping night and day until the sabbath.

Does 'Peter' preserve a genuine tradition of the conduct of the disciples, or is he merely drawing upon his own imagination? At least his statement shows that he did not believe the disciples had already fled into Galilee, as some think Mark implies. It is to be noted that the cry of woe is found in Tatian's Diatessaron. If the sabbath began in three hours, the phrase 'weeping night and day until the sabbath' seems absurd, unless the author means—'until the sabbath was past,' or more probably 'until the next sabbath,' i.e. for a week.

8. But the scribes and Pharisees and elders gathered themselves together, having heard that all the people murmured and beat their breasts, saying, If by his death these most mighty signs are come to pass, see how righteous he is! The elders were afraid, and came to Pilate to ask him, saying, Give us soldiers that we may guard his sepulchre for three days, lest his disciples come and steal him away, and the people suppose that he is risen from the dead and do us evil. And Pilate gave them Petronius the centurion with soldiers to guard the sepulchre. And with them came elders and scribes to the tomb, and rolling a great stone against the centurion and the soldiers they all together which were there set it at the door of the tomb. And they fixed seven seals, and they pitched a tent there and kept watch. And early in the morning as the sabbath was dawning came a crowd from Jerusalem and the region round about that they might see the sealed tomb.

9. And in the night in which the Lord's day was dawning, while the soldiers were watching two by two on guard, a great voice was heard in heaven, and they saw the heavens opened and two men coming down from thence with great light and approaching the sepulchre. And that stone which was put at the door rolled away of itself and departed out of the way. And the sepulchre stood open, and both the young men went in.

The heightening of the marvellous element is the most noticeable feature of this narrative, but it is important to observe in what direction the primitive tradition has been developed.

1. The young man of Mark has become two supernatural beings as in Luke and John, but 'Peter' still calls them 'young men.'

2. Their task is not to roll away the stone, as an earlier tradition had suggested, but to bring forth Jesus from the dead. We cannot wonder that the early Church, which believed that God had raised the body of Jesus from the tomb,[1] desired some further account of the manner in which the miracle had been wrought. In the angels by the tomb imagination had agents ready to hand, and in different traditions different functions were assigned to them.

Therefore those soldiers, when they saw this, awakened the centurion and the elders; for they too were present watching. And, as they were relating what things they had seen, again they see three men coming out from the sepulchre, and the two supporting the one, and a cross following them. And the head of the two reached to heaven, but the head of him whom they led by the hand overtopped the heavens. And they heard a voice from the heavens saying, Thou has preached to them that sleep. And an answer was heard from the cross, Yea.

The fact that the writer apparently imagined himself to be describing as historical event warns us how credulous were many of the early Christians; no description was too preposterous to offend the sturdy imagination of some simple believers in the early days. Three points stand out in the above passage: (1) The stature of the

[1] Acts iii. 15, iv. 10, Rom. iv. 2–4, 1 Cor. vi. 14, etc. To most, if not all, to raise Jesus from the dead would mean to raise the body from the tomb.

angels and of the risen Christ, intended no doubt to express the supernatural character of the angels,[1] and the divinity of the risen Jesus.[2] (2) The emphasis upon the descent into Hades which appealed so strongly to the imagination of the early Church; it is indeed surprising that the belief has left no mark on the canonical gospels. (3) The talking cross which seems to us specially ridiculous. There seems to have been an early belief that Jesus took his cross into the world of the dead; and it was not an unnatural idea that Jesus, preaching deliverance by the cross to the spirits in prison, should have a cross beside him as he preached. This answer of the cross is perhaps due to the difficulty of imagining the gigantic Jesus, whose mouth was above the heavens, answering a voice from heaven.

Section 10 relates with embellishments the report of the guard (cf. Matt. xxviii. 11–15).

11. And at dawn of the Lord's day, Mary Magdalene, a woman disciple of the Lord (who), fearing because of the Jews for they were burning with wrath, had not done at the Lord's tomb those things which the women are wont to do for their loved ones who are dead, took with her her friends and came to the tomb where he was laid. And they feared lest the Jews should see them. And they said, Even though we were not able to weep and lament on that day on which he was crucified, yet now we will do these things

[1] Compare the huge stature of the Egyptian kings in the ancient pictures.

[2] Dr. Armitage Robinson quotes Hermas Sim. ix. 6, where the Lord is described as 'a man of lofty stature, so as to overtop the tower,' and Perpetua (Passio X), where he is seen as 'a man of marvellous greatness, so as to overpass the top of the amphitheatre' (*Gospel of Peter*, p. 26). Swete quotes a Jewish legend that the first man was of enormous stature, but after he sinned the Holy One made him small. So the risen Jesus, having restored humanity, regains the original stature of the first man. (Swete, *The Akhmim Fragment*, p. 18.)

at his tomb. But who will roll away for us the stone which was laid at the door of the tomb, that we may go in, and sit by him, and do the things that are due? For the stone was great, and we fear lest someone see us. And if we are not able, even though we should put at the door the things which we bring for a memorial of him, we will weep and bewail until we come to our house.

This section is a good deal nearer to the Marcan tradition than the last. The writer recognizes that the object of the visit of the women was to repair the omission of Friday evening, but he cannot explain that they came to wrap the body in spices. Like Matthew, he has included the story of the setting of the guard, and it was obviously impossible for the women to penetrate the guard in order to render such a service. So, like Matthew, he must suggest another reason. They come to weep and lament. But 'Peter' has not Matthew's historical imagination, and he fails to carry out his alteration consistently. Matthew omits all mention of the women's difficulty about rolling away the stone, for in any case it would be impossible in the presence of the guard. 'Peter' says that the women came to weep, but retains their discussion about the stone—a clear indication that he has introduced into his earlier source an incongruous element. If the women only came to weep there was no need to enter the tomb; and what were the things they were carrying which they prepared to cast at the door of the tomb? Even if we pass over these inconsistencies we must still admit that the women were very unlikely to weep at the door of the tomb while the guard sat within a few yards; Matthew's 'came to see the tomb' is a much better suggestion.

And they went away and found the tomb opened, and they came near and looked in there; and they see there

a young man sitting in the midst of the tomb, beautiful and clothed in a brilliant raiment. And he said to them, Why are ye come? Whom seek ye? Surely not him who was crucified? He is risen, and departed. But if ye believe not, look in and see the place where he lay that he is not there. He is risen and departed thither whence he was sent. Then the women were afraid and fled.

12. Now it was the last day of unleavened bread, and many went out returning to their homes since the feast was over. But we, the twelve disciples of the Lord, were weeping and grieving; and each one grieving for that which was to come to pass departed to his home. But I, Simon Peter, and Andrew my brother took our nets and went away to the sea. And Levi the son of Alphæus was with us, whom the Lord . . .

This is nearer to Mark than to any of the other gospels. The women look into the tomb, as do the two disciples in the fourth gospel. They see, however, not John's two angels, but Mark's 'young man,' who thus survives in his original form, although previously transformed into two gigantic angels. His questions resemble those recorded by Mark, though the Marcan 'Behold, the place where they laid him' is given a Johannine ring by the addition of 'look in' (παρακύψατε). It is more important to notice that the resurrection is quite plainly identified with the ascension. 'He is risen and gone away whence he was sent.' This fact seems to prove that a view of the resurrection as identical with the ascension persisted, in spite of the Lucan narratives. 'Peter' also preserves the Marcan tradition that the women fled in terror, which all the other gospels omit: 'Peter' does not say that they told no man anything, but he implies it in the next section in which the disciples are described as still weeping and mourning.

As to the source of the concluding section, there is little to be said. It is certainly not dependent upon any

of the canonical gospels.[1] Indeed, the picture presented is inconsistent with any of the gospel narratives save only that of Mark. The disciples, knowing nothing about the resurrection, return sadly to their homes, and some of them resume their old occupation as fishermen. Probably 'Peter' went on to describe an appearance of the risen Lord to Simon or to all the disciples, for he is evidently leading up to a climax, but whether we shall ever know what he meant to say is extremely doubtful. So far as it goes the narrative is perfectly straightforward; there is nothing marvellous about it, nothing suggestive of legendary developments, and the fact that it does not combine well with the incident of the women just related suggests that 'Peter' is incorporating a genuine tradition rather than exercising his own imagination.

In a case of this kind the witness of 'Peter,' credulous though he be, may prove extremely valuable. He was probably writing after the composition of the first three canonical gospels, and even if he did not know them he did know many of the traditions which they contain. Yet in this passage we find him deliberately ruling out the accounts of Matthew and Luke. Why? There is no question of his peculiar doctrinal position. He is not here making way for late and fantastic legendary developments. Can there be any other explanation than that he is following an earlier tradition which the other evangelists have deserted? Probability in this matter favours 'Peter.' It is easy to see how an original

[1] I cannot agree with Dr. Armitage Robinson that this section 'adds a final proof of our writer's use of the Fourth Gospel' (*op. cit.*, p. 30). It proves acquaintance with the same tradition as is incorporated in John xxi., viz. that the disciples went back to their occupation on the lake; but that is not a proof that the author knew our gospel, which says nothing about mourning and grieving.

account of the disciples' flight to their own homes became modified, as in Luke and John, to accord with a growing belief in appearances at Jerusalem, it is not easy to see how a tradition that the disciples remained in company at Jerusalem should ever have been transformed into a belief that they departed to Galilee soon after the crucifixion. 'Peter' represents the disciples as remaining in Jerusalem until the end of the feast, but there is no hint that during the interval they received evidences of the resurrection; no report from the women cheered them, there was no appearance on the evening of the first day of the week, 'each one grieving for that which was come to pass departed to his home.' Could such a tradition ever have grown out of the situation described in Luke, or even from that depicted in Matthew? What conceivable reason could 'Peter' have for inventing the account? The probability is very strong that he is reproducing an early tradition which rests upon genuine historical fact.

It remains to be considered how far 'Peter's' account agrees with that of Mark. He does not actually contradict the genuine Marcan narrative, unless it be in his statement that the disciples remained in Jerusalem until the end of the feast. The message of the young man in Mark suggests that the disciples were to depart immediately for Galilee (xvi. 7). But it was not delivered by the women, and Mark may have gone on to describe a delay in the disciples' departure until the end of the feast.[1] This is really part of a larger question as to whether 'Peter' knew and used the lost conclusion of our second gospel. Lake[2] inclines to the opinion that he

[1] Or the message to the disciples may have been no part of the original Marcan tradition (*infra*, p. 181).

[2] *Op. cit.*, p. 162.

did, chiefly on the ground that 'Levi the son of Alphæus,' so called in the last line of the Petrine fragment, is only thus styled elsewhere in Mark ii. 14. But surely it is most improbable that the conclusion of Mark, unknown to Matthew and Luke, should have come into the hands of 'Peter.' We have every reason to suppose that the last verses of Mark were lost at a very early date, perhaps before a single copy of the gospel had been made, and unless 'Peter' was a member of the same church as the author of our second gospel, he is not likely to have seen the original.[1] But that does not mean that he was unacquainted with the tradition which the lost conclusion embodied. Critics are too ready to assume that the evangelists wrote down facts with which no one else in the world was acquainted until their gospels had been published. Such an assumption is a survival of an obsolete criticism. Whatever view may be taken of the historical value of the gospels, no scholar whose opinion is worthy of any consideration supposes that the evangelists sat down to compose romances unrelated to the traditions already current in the churches. Luke tells us that he collected his materials, and an examination of Matthew proves that he did the same. Why then should it be assumed that because two writers incorporated the same material the one must have had the other's work before him? 'Peter's' account of the events following the resurrection may 'agree better with what may be best imagined to have been the contents of the lost conclusion than with any other known document' (Lake), but that in itself provides small reason for a belief that 'Peter' had seen

[1] Mark probably wrote in Rome and it is doubtful whether his gospel was widely read outside the Roman Church, though Matthew and Luke came across copies: there is no evidence of the circulation of the Gospel of Peter in the West; it was most probably a Syrian gospel (H.D.B., v. 428).

Mark's work in its original completeness. The most that can be said is that he may have been acquainted with the tradition which Mark also followed; if so, and if he wrote as late as the second century, the Gospel of Peter furnishes remarkable testimony to the vitality of early tradition even at a time when it had been competing for many years against later and more popular forms of the narrative.

The value we attach to the evidence of 'Peter' depends to a certain extent upon the view we hold upon the question of his indebtedness to the four canonical gospels. To the present writer the evidence commonly adduced to prove that 'Peter' is little more than a clumsy harmonist is altogether unconvincing. That he knew many of the traditions embodied in our four gospels cannot be denied, but that he actually knew the gospels seems a much more doubtful proposition, and the difficulty of accounting for his divergencies on this hypothesis is much greater than that of accounting for his similarities without any such theory. If 'Peter' wrote independently, then we have a fifth witness to the traditions current in the Church somewhere about the end of the first century.

In any case that is partially true. There are some elements in the Petrine account which the author certainly did not derive from any of the canonical gospels; unless he invented them, which is most unlikely, he must have derived them from the traditions current in the Church at the time at which he wrote. Whatever the intrinsic value of these traditions may be, it is important for our purpose to observe that they were received in certain circles in the early Church. No attempt to reconstruct the growth of the Resurrection Narratives can afford to ignore them.

CHAPTER VI

THE GROWTH OF TRADITION—I

WE are now in a position to endeavour to trace the development of those traditions which are embodied in our various sources. It is tradition rather than facts which must first be examined. The old method of approaching the problem of the resurrection was to take the accounts of the gospels, and, regarding them as more or less accurate narratives of facts, to endeavour by skilful manipulation to fit them into a consistent whole. That method would be good enough if the gospels were contemporary accounts written by eye-witnesses. But modern study has proved beyond question that they are not first-hand accounts. The gospels were written some forty to seventy years after the crucifixion at a time when memory of the events which they chronicle had become blurred; and they were written by men who were faced with very great difficulties in the collection of reliable material in an age in which all kinds of stories were readily invented and as readily believed. That the gospels differ so much among themselves can cause no surprise to anyone who can picture, even faintly, the conditions under which they were composed. All things considered, the marvel is that they resemble each other so much.

Whatever may be the dates of the several gospels, there can be no doubt that they were written after a considerable period in which tradition had been handed

down orally. For many years the Christians taught every man his neighbour and every man his brother, and we know what that must have meant. At first the Apostles would supply a steadying influence, but the gospel spread far and wide, and we have no evidence that many of the Apostles were travellers. In fifty years not one Christian in a thousand would have seen an Apostle; knowledge of the facts of the life of Christ would be derived from those who themselves had learnt from others, and so on through many links of a chain.

No wonder traditions varied in different churches; no wonder that in an age which loved miracles and knew no scientific or philosophical objection to them the marvellous element tended to be increased; no wonder that the unconscious prejudices of the narrators coloured the narratives and distorted the picture they presented! The wonder is that after half a century accepted beliefs bore any relationship at all to historical fact. Two circumstances saved the situation. The first was the fact that for a time very little interest seems to have been taken in history as such, so that distortion was not so widespread as it must have been if historical interest had been more intense. The second was the publication of the gospels just in time. The writers were sufficiently near to those who could and did give reliable testimony to curb the extravagances of popular credulity. Thirty or forty years later it would have been impossible; but if Mark knew Peter, if the author of the first gospel was somehow indebted to one of the twelve, and if Luke had belonged to the company of St. Paul, these men could all supply reliable information to check the growth of legend.

Let us picture the circumstances in which they wrote. The earliest expectation of an immediate Parousia was

growing faint, and Christianity was changing its tone. Less absorbed in the Christ to come, the Church was beginning to take more interest in the Jesus of history. What did he do? What did he say? How did he live and die and rise again? We may be sure that the demand for information on such subjects quickly created a supply, but human nature being what it is it would be strange if there were not some ready to teach more than they really knew. Vague scraps of tradition would be seized upon and worked up in accordance with the preconceived ideas of the narrators. Each would add something or omit something from the stories he had heard, and in a very short time the traditions of different churches would differ widely. There were no critical standards of historical accuracy, there was little check upon the exuberance of the imagination. We can understand what St. Luke meant when he said that many had taken in hand to draw up a narrative 'of those things that have been fulfilled among us.'[1] St. Luke was growing old, and he felt that he ought to make use of the peculiar privileges which he had enjoyed; so before it was too late, he sat down 'to write unto thee in order.' Thus he could correct the erroneous versions of the history which were everywhere current in the churches.

But what was his own position? He was not an eyewitness any more than Matthew or Mark, he himself was dependent upon the accounts of others. But Luke, unlike many who undertook to instruct others, had been in touch with those who had been present on the occasions described, and he was able to correct in many particulars the commonly accepted stories. A study of St. Luke's gospel does not suggest that he derived much original

[1] *διήγησις* is not necessarily a written narrative, nor did it necessarily cover the whole period of the Lord's ministry.

matter from the eye-witnesses of whom he speaks; he has few 'graphic touches,' few narratives which do not seem to have been derived from traditional sources on which others were able to draw; St. Luke does not seem to take us so near to the actual scenes of the gospel history as does St. Mark; but he could at least defend the Church against the danger of accepting legend as fact, he could omit much from his narrative that was not worthy of being believed. Here, we would suggest, is the difference between the Gospel of Peter and the Gospel of Luke. Both are founded upon the traditions current in the last quarter of the first century, but whereas 'Peter' presents those traditions as the average Christian was compelled to accept them, fragmentary, confused and unreliable, Luke presents them as censored by one who not only possessed the intellectual ability and historical imagination to construct a coherent narrative, but who also knew enough from sources unknown to 'Peter' to recognize and reject some at least of the legendary accretions which had grown around the gospel narratives. Luke also possessed the inestimable advantage of familiarity with Mark and Q.

To a large extent the same is true of 'Matthew.' We know less of the author of our first gospel, and in some ways we estimate his abilities less highly, but he was evidently in a position vastly superior to that of 'Peter' in approaching the task which he undertook. He too had Mark before him, he too had Q in the earlier sections, and as a rule he displayed an admirable caution in incorporating material not guaranteed by either of his main sources.

It is observable that the greatest divergence between the gospels is to be found in the narratives of the resurrection. Luke and John desert Mark entirely, and

although Matthew follows Mark's outline fairly closely up to Mark xvi. 8, the new elements which he introduces in the last section are more considerable than any historical additions contained in his earlier chapters. This is what we should expect. Those parts of the gospel narrative which were most often repeated would most rapidly exhibit signs of the growth of tradition, and probably no part of the gospel story was so often narrated as that which provided the evidence of the resurrection. Every missionary, every preacher, would have something to say about it, for there can be no doubt that the resurrection was central in early Christian apologetics. Can we wonder that before long a wide divergence was apparent between the traditions of one church and those of another? A disturbing element crept in very early in the appearance of the Jerusalem tradition. It had been believed that the risen Christ was seen in Galilee, but for some reason a rival tradition soon became current that his appearance took place in Jerusalem. Uncertainty on this point disturbed the stability of the whole narrative, early traditions were modified, some were transferred to a new scene, some were forgotten in order to make room for the new material, and the result was confusion. We shall have to discuss the origin and value of the Jerusalem tradition, for the present it is enough to point out how greatly its growth complicated the task of an evangelist in ordering his narrative. Matthew seems to have known nothing of the appearances at Jerusalem, or, if he did, he resisted the temptation to force them into the Marcan scheme, but Luke was so impressed with the value of the Jerusalem tradition that he deserted Mark and committed himself to an account of the resurrection which ignores Galilee entirely, and rules out any Galilean appearances. In John we see the Jerusalem tradition

supreme, but the Galilee tradition still claims recognition in the appendix.

All this serves to illustrate the difficulty of the task with which the evangelists were faced. They had to make a continuous narrative which at least avoided self-contradiction, and they had to make it out of materials which were in many important respects self-contradictory. Individually they succeeded fairly well, but their several solutions of the problem were not the same, and they cannot be mutually reconciled.

The task before us is to endeavour to trace in the gospels the sources which were used in their composition, to study such evidences of development as may be discernible, and to work back to the earliest form of the tradition, and thus perhaps to a knowledge of the facts described.

A broad question emerges first, and it is one of the most important. Two contrasted traditions are apparent in the gospels; according to one the appearances of the risen Lord, or at least the first of such appearances, took place in Galilee; so Matthew thought, so Mark seems to have believed, and so thought 'Peter'; according to the other Jesus appeared in Jerusalem before the disciples had left the city; so thought Luke and the author of the fourth gospel. Both these traditions cannot be primitive, for they are mutually exclusive. Unless we reject both we must suppose that one is later than the other.

There can be little question which is to be preferred. Mark is by far our best authority, and he is committed to the Galilee tradition; Matthew, writing some years later, knows no other; and even 'Peter,' who accepts many legendary developments, seems ignorant of any

appearance in Jerusalem before the departure of the disciples. The authority of Luke is not sufficient to outweigh the testimony of those three witnesses, even though he be supported by John; the natural and inevitable conclusion is that the earliest tradition placed the first appearances in Galilee, and that the tradition which influenced Luke and John was only known in a limited circle.

The growth of this latter tradition is not difficult to explain. Our usual test favours the priority of the Galilee tradition. It is more likely that an original belief in appearances in Galilee gave way to a belief in appearances in Jerusalem, than *vice versa*. If the angel announced the resurrection on the Sunday morning the long delay before anyone saw the risen Lord would seem inexplicable. 'Peter' has a tradition, which seems early enough to command respect, that the disciples remained a whole week in Jerusalem without seeing Jesus. How improbable if Jesus had risen on the third day! We can imagine the impatience of the narrator hastening to the consummation of his narrative. Jesus was risen, then Jesus would not leave his disciples sorrowing for a week under the impression that he was dead. Mark and Matthew, ignorant of the Jerusalem tradition, say that a message was sent through the women promising an appearance to the disciples. That was an improvement on the earlier belief, but others treated tradition more radically. If Jesus was risen and the disciples were in Jerusalem, then Jesus must have appeared to his disciples in Jerusalem. The argument was logical, even though the logic was unconscious; can we doubt that the facts would soon be supplied? Not many years would elapse before someone related that Jesus had appeared to his disciples on the very day of the resurrection.

But whence would he derive his material for this new version of the history? Here, as elsewhere, the hypothesis of deliberate invention may be safely rejected. As Paley argued long ago, the early Christians were honest men, though they were neither critics not historians in the modern sense. We may well believe that the first narrator of the story of an appearance in or near Jerusalem had not far to seek for his material. The Galilee tradition has only come down to us in a vague and mutilated form; Mark's account is lost, so is 'Peter's,' and Matthew's is very brief. John xxi. indicates that stories were still current in A.D. 100. What more natural than that a tradition of an appearance to the disciples in Galilee, a tradition probably vague as to time and place, should be transferred to Jerusalem? There is a good deal of similarity between Matthew xxviii. 16–20, Luke xxiv. 36–end and John xx. 19–23. Quite unconsciously a teacher, who had realized the intrinsic probability of an appearance in Jerusalem, would speak as though Jerusalem had been the scene of the occurrence, another who heard his version would make the statement even more definite, and very soon it would, within a limited circle, become a settled belief. Then within the same circle the tendency would be for the Galilee tradition to be forgotten; it did not combine easily with the newly established belief, it was not needed as evidence, and before long it would pass into oblivion. That is exactly what seems to have happened. The Jerusalem tradition never altogether displaced the older belief throughout the Church as a whole, for it crops up again in the appendix to the fourth gospel and in 'Peter'; but the tendency was for those who believed that the risen Lord had appeared in Jerusalem to forget the more primitive accounts of his appearances in Galilee.

It is possible again that in some form a Judean tradition was primitive. The narrative in Luke xxiv. of the appearance to the disciples at Emmaus may have been modified only in respect of the date. After the Galilee appearances the disciples certainly returned to Jerusalem; that is proved by the later history recorded in Acts. It may be that some of those who lived in Judæa had, as Luke says, to recount to the eleven experiences similar to those which the eleven had had in Galilee, and that the Emmaus story was a narrative which the eleven heard from some of those whom they met on their return to Jerusalem. That would explain 'The Lord is risen indeed and hath appeared unto Simon.' The Judeans told their story, and it was not received with the surprise they had anticipated, for the other disciples could confirm the central fact 'the Lord is risen indeed.' As it stands the declaration 'he hath appeared unto Simon' is inexplicable, for it is incredible that an appearance to Peter can have taken place on the first day of the week which has left no other trace whatever on the traditions embodied in the gospels. But if the disciples were speaking some weeks later, and their reference was to an appearance in Galilee, then the statement is linked up with Mark xvi 7, John xxi. and 1 Cor. xv. 5. To this point we shall return, for the present we need only point out that the creators of the Jerusalem tradition may have had some apposite material to draw upon; there may have been appearances in Judæa, but they did not take place on the third day after the crucifixion. By foreshortening the narrative Luke, or rather the creators of his sources, introduced a confusing element into the resurrection narratives which has been the despair of harmonizers ever since.

If these suggestions are accepted, we have got over

one of the greatest barriers to the reconstruction of the earliest tradition by eliminating the stories of appearances at Jerusalem on the first day of the week. These stories, as they stand in the third and fourth gospels, are either accounts of later events ante-dated, or they are accounts of appearances in Galilee which tradition, developing among those who could not believe that Jesus left his disciples a whole week without an assurance of his resurrection, has transferred from Galilee to Jerusalem. Very possibly both these suggestions are true, and the stories as we have them are compounded of three elements, (*a*) genuine reminiscence, (*b*) a tendency to ante-date certain narratives, (*c*) a belief that Jesus appeared in Jerusalem and not in Galilee.

Let us now consider the various events recorded and endeavour to trace the development of the several traditions concerning them which appear in the gospels. We may begin with the burial by Joseph.

The Burial

There can be no reasonable doubt that Mark's version of the event represents the earliest tradition which has survived. Jesus had yielded up his spirit and the afternoon was far advanced. The near approach of the sabbath made it specially desirable that steps be taken to dispose of the body before six o'clock.[1] Accordingly the initiative was taken by a well-to-do member of the Sanhedrim, who was not only concerned for the observance of the law, but who was probably well disposed towards Jesus. 'Peter' says that he was his friend, Luke that he was a just man, Mark that he was waiting for the Kingdom of God, Matthew and John that he was a dis-

[1] And of the bodies of the robbers, if they were dead.

ciple. Possibly tradition reflects a certain vagueness in the mind of Joseph himself; he was a good Jew inasmuch as he did not wish to see the law violated, but he was surely something more than the agent of the hostile Sanhedrim. He did not wish to see the body of Jesus cast into the common grave, and he had a plan of his own which he proceeded to carry into effect.

Pilate's permission must first be obtained. It needed courage to appear publicly as interested in the disposal of the body of Jesus; even though, as 'Peter' says, he was on good terms with the governor his action might compromise him in the eyes of the crowd, and bring upon him the suspicion of his fellow-councillors.[1] Pilate, reassured as to the death of Jesus, granted Joseph's request. Joseph gave proof of his good will by the purchase of linen in which to wind the body, but there was no time for an elaborate burial, and the spices were omitted. Mark simply states that Joseph, presumably with the assistance of his servants, took down the body of Jesus, and laid him in a tomb which had been hewn out of rock. Despite the brevity of the description, the meaning is clear. Joseph owned, or was able to use, one of the Jewish sepulchres hewn out of some rocky cliff. We are not told by Mark that it was new, or that Joseph had made it, or that he was the owner, but these are points which tradition would very soon determine. The rolling of a stone to the door of the sepulchre completed the burial, but the whole operation was probably as brief as Mark's narrative, for the sabbath was very near. Two women, Mary Magdalene and Mary

[1] Mark's *τολμήσας* is against the theory that Joseph was acting only as the agent of the Sanhedrim. Mark calls him a councillor simply because it was true, and not to suggest the reason for his action.

the Mother of Joses, and perhaps others, beheld the place of burial.

The modifications of this short account which are contained in the other gospels need not detain us. Matthew and John, as we have seen, make it quite clear that Joseph was a disciple, but the independent explanations of 'Peter' and Luke prove that the earliest tradition was vague on the subject. The accounts of the first and fourth gospels provide good examples of the way in which tradition grew. The easiest explanation of Joseph's action seemed to be that he was a disciple, so Matthew's tradition states his discipleship as a fact. John went further; impressed by the difficulty of one man alone accomplishing the burial he brought in a collaborator whose position seemed similar to that of Joseph. Together the two secret disciples rendered the service which the declared followers of Jesus were too cowardly, perhaps too obscure, to perform. Other alterations of the Marcan account can all be traced to the reverent feelings of those among whom tradition grew. Matthew says that the sepulchre was Joseph's own property and new. Luke says that no man was yet laid in it, and so says John, who adds that it was near and in a garden. Some or all of these details may be historical, but in any case they would certainly come to be believed. Matthew's statement that the women 'were sitting over against the tomb' is perhaps the most certainly historical addition inasmuch as there seems no reason for its invention. Luke's elaboration 'they saw how the body was laid' has less claim to be regarded as historical; it is a natural expansion of Mark's plain 'they beheld where he was laid,' but the women would not be able to see how the body was placed unless they stood inside the door, which is improbable.

One addition to Mark's account is certainly unhistorical, and that is John's statement that Joseph and Nicodemus 'brought a roll (? mixture) of myrrh and aloes, about a hundred pounds, and they bound the body in sheets with the spices as is the manner of preparing for burial among the Jews.' The passage is not only absent from Mark, but it is inconsistent with Mark's whole account, for he says that the women came to the tomb with the express object of repairing Joseph's omission. There can be little doubt that John represents a tradition which developed under the influence of the belief that Joseph was a disciple and therefore could have lost no opportunity of doing honour to the sacred body of the Lord. The tradition may also imply a failure in certain circles to understand the Jewish method of reckoning time and hence to appreciate the urgency of the work; the author of the gospel knows that the sabbath is at hand (xix. 42), but his sources may have been less well informed.

The garden in John may represent a development of tradition due to a reverent feeling that the resurrection must have taken place in quiet surroundings; but the Gospel of Peter proves that the tradition was widespread.

The Visit of the Women

Again Mark is unquestionably our best authority, the starting point in any investigation. He relates that the women waited until the sabbath was past—i.e., till 6 p.m. on Saturday—and then bought spices that they might come in the morning to anoint the body of Jesus. Mark is somewhat confused as to the hour of their expedition, for he describes it as λίαν πρωί, which should mean

about 4 a.m., but adds ἀνατείλαντος τοῦ ἡλίου, which suggests a time, at that season of the year, about two hours later.[1] The confusion is reflected in the other gospels, Luke with ὄρθρου βαθέως is indefinite, and John says plainly 'while it was yet dark,' but Matthew has the difficult 'On the sabbath evening, when it was dawning to the first day of the week,' the explanation of which has already been suggested.[2] The point is not very important, for the meaning is clear; the women came to the tomb as soon as there was light enough to make their intended work possible.

That Matthew, 'Peter,' and John omit to mention the purpose of their visit is a fact which is easily explained: Matthew and 'Peter' have inserted a tradition about a guard at the tomb which would make the work of the women impossible, and John says that it had been done already. Matthew says that they came to gaze upon the tomb, a somewhat feeble explanation, but John gives none at all. Mark names the women; they were Mary Magdalene, Mary the Mother of James, and Salome. Whether he means by 'Mary of James' the same woman who is mentioned as a witness of the burial and who is called Mary of Joses in xv. 47 we cannot say. It appears that tradition was vague as to the identity of the women. Matthew speaks of 'Mary Magdalene and the other Mary,' Luke only inserts their names as an afterthought in a verse which looks like an interpolation (xxiv. 10),[3] 'Peter' and John name Mary Magdalene only, though John has οἴδαμεν and 'Peter' says that she took 'her friends.' That the earliest tradition spoke of several women cannot be doubted, but in a few years

[1] Even if the phrase be translated 'at sunrise' the difficulty is not wholly removed.

[2] *Supra*, p. 38.

[3] *Supra*, p. 47.

only the Magdalene was remembered, and uncertainty as to the identity of the others caused them to drop out of the tradition altogether.

Matthew's account of the setting of the watch is one of several traditions concerning the events of the last days which he seems to have adopted on poor authority. That it is founded on fact is most unlikely. 'Peter' knows it and elaborates the story, but it is ignored by Mark, Luke, and John, and is obviously inconsistent with the earlier tradition. No doubt the belief grew up in an attempt to meet a Jewish theory that the disciples had stolen the body of Jesus, but it is hard to say which belief is the more improbable. No one with any sense of history could suggest that the resurrection was a fraud, and no one with an elementary critical faculty could accept Matthew's refutation of the suggestion. As they drew near the women discussed the difficulty which confronted them, 'Who will roll away for us the stone?' Matthew, consistently with his change in the purpose of their visit, omits to mention this difficulty, and Luke passes over a detail which seems to him unimportant; John omits because he is thinking of a different kind of sepulchre. But there can be no doubt that Mark's tradition is primitive, and 'Peter' supplies valuable confirmation by including it in his narrative though it accords ill with his idea that the women only came to weep. The stone may or may not have been of unusual size (Mark, *μέγας σφόδρα*), but in any case it might defy the efforts of three women to roll it away. Looking up, they see it rolled back. Mark goes on to narrate that the women came to the tomb [1] and saw a young man sitting on the right clothed in white raiment.

[1] *εἰσελθοῦσαι εἰς τὸ μνημεῖον*· B reads *ἐλθοῦσαι*. Does Mark imply that they went inside? Not in this passage (verse 5) neces-

No passage provides a better example than this of the development of tradition. Mark's statement is simple and restrained, and 'Peter' is good evidence that the earliest tradition concerned 'a young man,' though he enlarges on the Marcan account by describing his raiment as 'very bright,' and representing him as seated in the middle of the tomb. But Christian curiosity could not long be content with such a description. One obvious suggestion was that the young man was the Lord, and John has actually reproduced a tradition that Mary saw the Lord outside the tomb. But there were difficulties in the way of a general acceptance of that idea. Early tradition retained some memory of the conversation which ensued, and that did not accord with such a theory, tradition affirmed that the risen Lord did not appear for some days (Mark, 'Peter'), and in that case the young man must have been someone else. Surely an angel. So Mark thought, though he was apparently interpreting rather than reproducing his sources, and so tradition in the time of Matthew had long affirmed. But if he was an angel the description of his appearance lent itself to amplification; obviously it was he who had rolled away the stone, and Matthew states definitely that he came down from heaven, rolled away the stone, and sat upon it; 'and his appearance was as lightning, and his raiment white as snow.' Presumably Matthew's description must be understood as resting on the report of the guards, for there were no other witnesses. It is a great advance on Mark's primitive tradition.

So too is the account of Luke. It seems to have been

sarily, but verse 8 has *ἐξελθοῦσαι ἔφυγον*. Mark then means that they had entered the tomb either before they saw the young man or in response to his invitation. But Lake (*op. cit.*, p. 62 f.) points out that there is some slight doubt about the text of *ἐξελθοῦσαι*, and the other evangelists seem to have found Mark ambiguous.

a common notion that angels did not appear singly.[1] Luke has two angels at the ascension (Acts i.), and here he tells of two men in dazzling apparel. That these men represent Mark's 'young man' cannot be doubted for a moment. Tradition has developed in accordance with the ideas of the age.

Once more 'Peter' is important. He also has two men who descend from the rending heavens, with a great noise and a blaze of light, and both 'young men' enter the tomb. Here we have a curious blend of traditions. The descent of the angels reminds us of Matthew, their characterization as 'young men' is reminiscent of Mark, and the fact that there are two is evidence of the tendency which has led Luke to write of two men in dazzling apparel. Peter does not harmonize the gospels, he blends traditions which appear separately in the synoptic narratives.

That the more developed form of a tradition did not always take the place of the simpler form, but that two or more forms sometimes persisted side by side, is clear both from 'Peter' and John. In the fourth gospel the 'young man' appears both as the Lord himself, and as two angels sitting in the tomb. In 'Peter' he appears in three forms: (1) as two mighty angels summoning the Lord from the dead, (2) as one angel entering the empty tomb, and (3) as a young man sitting in the midst of the tomb. 'Peter' probably intends (2) and (3) to be taken as referring to the same angel, the descent from heaven being preparatory to the visit of the women, but there can be little doubt that he is reproducing three independent developments of the one original tradition.

[1] Swete quotes 2 Macc. iii. 26. 'Two others appeared unto him, young men notable in their strength and beautiful in their glory.'

What are we to say then about the various non-Marcan traditions of the discovery of the women? Only one thing can be said, and that is that they are all dependent upon inferences drawn from the Marcan tradition and that none of them has any independent historical value. They represent divergent lines on which the development of tradition has taken place and they defy any attempt to harmonize them, but taken one by one they are all easily accounted for as attempts to make clear ambiguities in Mark, and to combine his narrative, or the tradition on which his narrative is founded, with the current ideas of the age.

The accounts of the angel's message present greater difficulties. Mark says that the young man, seeing the embarrassment of the women, began with a word of assurance, 'Be not amazed.' Then he interpreted their errand, 'Ye seek Jesus the Nazarene who hath been crucified.' Then he made the momentous announcement, 'He is risen, he is not here; behold the place where they laid him.' There is no ambiguity in the narrative: the young man knows what the women want, observes their terror, and tells them that their search is vain, for the Lord is risen. Matthew is in substantial agreement, though Luke puts a question into the angel's mouth, and represents the angels as reminding the women of the Lord's prophecy of his death and resurrection. 'Peter' also adopts an interrogative form, 'Whom seek ye?' The point is the same in all accounts, the angel or angels announce to the women the fact of the resurrection. Only John reports no more than a question, 'Woman, why weepest thou? Whom seekest thou?'

We must ask whether in this respect we can detect any evidence of an earlier tradition behind that which appears in the synoptic gospels and in 'Peter.' Not

much stress can be laid upon the silence of John as to the all-important announcement; the fourth gospel concentrates upon the evidence of the empty tomb and the angels' testimony becomes unnecessary, but it may not be altogether without significance that even at the date when St. John wrote a tradition survived that Mary had been met simply with a question.

It is Mark's account which must be most carefully examined. That an angel, recognized as such from the first, should be described as 'a young man' is not altogether surprising; we may again refer to 2 Macc. iii. 26 as evidence that angels were thought of as 'young men.' On the other hand, the associations of the word may have led to the conclusion that the young man was an angel. The sobriety of Mark's description suggests that the explanation had not long been current when he wrote. The descriptions in Matthew and 'Peter' illustrate the kind of thing to be expected when once the angelic character of the young man was firmly established. In Mark the only sign of his angelic nature is in the white robe which he wears.

Have we sufficient ground for concluding that in the earliest tradition the young man was a supernatural being? It is a matter on which opinions will differ, and no proof is possible of either view, but that the man was a man whom early tradition supposed to have been an angel is a possibility which cannot be ignored. It is perfectly easy to understand how the belief in his angelic character may have grown up. The early Church was convinced by the experiences of certain of its members that the Lord who had died was alive again. In that case the majority would conclude that his body was no longer in the grave. That fact might explain the curious adventures of certain women who had gone to the tomb

and meeting a young man had been told by him that Jesus who had been crucified was not there. At the time they had been too frightened to understand his meaning; but now all was clear, he was telling them that Jesus was risen from the dead. Who was he? In the twilight it had been impossible to notice his appearance, and moreover the women had been too much confused at his unexpected presence to be able to observe him accurately; but surely there could be little doubt as to his nature; if not the Lord, he was an angel sent to inform them of the resurrection, and, perhaps, to assist in raising Jesus from the dead.

Mark's narrative reads like an intermediate version of the tradition. The belief in the empty tomb has been established, but it has not yet had time to influence the narrative in all particulars. Mark does not put it beyond doubt that he wishes to represent the young man as an angel, and he does not explicitly draw the obvious inference that the angel had rolled away the stone. This omission to explain the fact that the tomb was open is very remarkable; we can hardly doubt that in the earliest tradition no explanation was given.[1] The women said that they found the tomb open, how it came to be open was not at first explained.

We must now examine the words spoken by the young man, 'Be not amazed, Ye seek Jesus the Nazarene who hath been crucified; he is risen, he is not here; behold the place where they laid him (Western text—'see there his place'). But go, tell his disciples and Peter that he goeth before you into Galilee and there ye will see him, as he said unto you.'

[1] It is not even certain that the fact was stated. Mark reads more smoothly if we omit xvi. 4*a*, thus, 'They said to themselves, Who will roll away for us the stone from the door of the tomb? For it was very great.' As the text stands γάρ is awkward.

In the first part of this speech the announcement of the resurrection depends upon one word, ἠγέρθη. Without that word the young man's meaning would be a simple negative statement that Jesus was not there, and an invitation to the women to see the place where they laid him. Of such an utterance the natural interpretation would be that the women had come to the wrong tomb, and that the young man was endeavouring to direct them to the right one. In the absence of any textual evidence against ἠγέρθη, such an interpretation of the text might be dismissed as a rationalistic attempt to minimize the evidence for the empty tomb, were it not for two important considerations. The first is the Western Text, and the second is the subsequent silence of the women. The Codex Bezae, supported in part by the Latin and Syriac versions, reads ἠγέρθη, οὐκ ἔστιν ὧδε, ἴδετε ἐκεῖ τόπον αὐτοῦ. Transcriptional probability is almost decisive in favour of this reading. We can understand how D's reading with its contrast between ὧδε and ἐκεῖ came to be altered into the familiar reading, but it is almost inconceivable that any scribe would go out of his way to insert ἐκεῖ in a text which did not contain it, and thus, according to ancient ideas, weaken the evidence for the resurrection. If Mark wrote the words as we have them in the Cambridge Codex the evidence is very much strengthened for the suggestion that the young man was pointing the women to another tomb, and in that case ἠγέρθη has almost certainly crept into the tradition by a misunderstanding. The young man declared that Jesus was not 'here' but 'there,' and the Church, interpreting his words as an announcement of the resurrection, added 'he is risen.' But that the word was not spoken to the women is strongly suggested by their subsequent conduct. They fled from

the tomb and told no one. To Matthew such conduct was altogether incredible, and he expressly denies it. So does Luke. They were right. If the women had been told that Jesus had risen, it is inconceivable that they would have preserved silence. No emphasis upon the trembling and amazement which had seized them can possibly account for their conduct. Mark does not say how long they remained silent, but 'Peter' represents the disciples as mourning and grieving for a week, and since we have every reason to accept 'Peter's' narrative as here founded upon a primitive tradition,[1] the probability is that the lost conclusion of Mark described the women as preserving silence for some considerable time.

Thus the evidence against ἠγέρθη as belonging to the earliest tradition is very strong. As it stands it destroys the credibility of the narrative, and if it were not originally present it is perfectly certain that it would very soon be supplied. It is perhaps worthy of notice that neither Luke nor John, who follow different strains of tradition, has anything to correspond with 'he is risen.' Luke's tradition seems to have felt the need of it, but in his case the need is supplied not by a plain statement, but by an argument.[2] In John the angels say only 'Woman, why weepest thou?'

One other point. Luke and John both represent the angels as asking a question; perhaps this is evidence that in the earliest tradition the young man began with an interrogation and that Mark's source had, 'Do ye seek Jesus the Nazarene?'; it is the Matthean strain which, under the influence of the belief that he was an angel, changes the young man's question into a statement, 'I know that ye seek Jesus.' A 'young man' would more naturally ask a question before he offered assistance.

[1] *Supra*, pp. 110 ff. [2] 'Remember how he said unto you,' etc.

If the earliest tradition contained no ἠγέρθη the young man's announcement must have ended at ἔθηκαν αὐτόν or τόπον αὐτοῦ as the case may be, and the message to the disciples must be an addition made under the influence of the belief that the young man was an angel. There are independent grounds for suspecting that Mark xvi. 7 is not primitive but is due to the growth of a belief that the resurrection was first announced to the women who were commissioned to carry the news to the disciples. Two arguments may be urged against it. Firstly, it will be observed that Luke, 'Peter,' and John show no trace of any knowledge of it. Luke and John follow a tradition which branched off from the Marco-Matthean tradition at an early date, and which quickly developed independent characteristics due to the belief that Jesus appeared to the disciples in Jerusalem. 'Peter's' tradition also branched off the main stream before Mark's time, but it is unmixed with the Jerusalem tradition. If then 'Peter' and Luke agree against Mark, there is strong reason for preferring their common testimony to that of Mark. This is just such a case; neither the Petrine tradition nor the Lucan tradition contained any reference to a message to the disciples; the inference is that in this respect Mark is not primitive. Secondly, Mark virtually contradicts his own statement by preserving the original tradition that the women said nothing to any man. The reason he alleges is fear; but, whatever the object of 'they feared' may have been, it cannot have provided a satisfactory explanation of the women's silence if they had just been entrusted with a momentous message to the disciples. As the story runs, there could be no reason for their fear. Omit ἠγέρθη and verse 7 and we can readily understand their fear, for they had had a very frightening experience; but if they

had just been informed that Jesus was risen and would meet his disciples in Galilee, the appropriate emotion would have been joy, and their intense desire would have been to deliver their message without a moment's delay. The conclusion seems quite inevitable, Mark xvi. 7, like ἠγέρθη, is an addition to the primitive tradition made under the influence of the belief that the women discovered that the resurrection had taken place.

It may be objected that, even though verses 7 and 8 are inconsistent, verse 8 may be the less primitive. Two considerations are fatal to such a suggestion. The first depends on the witness of 'Peter,' whose tradition that the disciples were ignorant of the resurrection nearly a week later, since it contradicts the whole trend of later belief, could not possibly be an invention; and the second is that, although we can see good reason for the development of the tradition embodied in verse 7, we can see no reason for the later invention of the statement contained in verse 8. There is only one conceivable explanation of the statement that the women kept silence, and that is that it is historical.

We may conclude that the earliest tradition concerning the visit of the women to the tomb is represented by Mark's narrative after certain important omissions have been made. Mary and some others came very early, almost before sunrise, bringing spices to anoint the body of Jesus. They were doubtful as to their ability to accomplish their purpose, and not a little afraid of being seen.[1] As they approached the place of tombs they were surprised to see the door of the tomb which they took to be that of Jesus open, and a moment later they were startled at being accosted by a young man. He told them not to be afraid, and asked them whom they sought; then,

[1] 'Peter' xi.

guessing that they were friends of the crucified Nazarene, he told them that he was not here, yonder was his place. But the women, already wrought to a state of extreme nervous excitement, hardly waited to hear his words; panic seized them and they fled from the tomb. Not a word did they say to others of the failure of their endeavour; perhaps they feared the rebukes of their friends, or perhaps they feared to be identified as disciples of the discredited Jesus. They had been discovered by an unknown man, in what they had hoped to have made a secret errand. Their safest plan was to keep silence.

If such was the earliest tradition, there is not a detail in any of the gospels which cannot be explained as a natural elaboration of the simple story. At a time when the resurrection had become an article of faith the experience of the women would be told and retold. The young man must have been an angel (all the gospels). If there was one angel there were probably two (Luke and John). The announcement that 'Jesus is not here' must have meant that 'he is risen' (Mark and Matthew). 'Yonder is his place' meant 'See where his body was and is not' (Matthew); John's elaborate account of the position of the grave clothes is only an expansion of the same idea. If the body was gone, no doubt the women made a search for it (Luke), and that would come most naturally before they saw the angel (Luke and John). Better witnesses than the women would make the evidence more secure, so John brings two of the chief disciples to examine the empty tomb. Some suggested that the young man was the Lord, and, though it could not be maintained against the more probable explanation, a tradition lingered that the women had actually spoken with him (Matthew, John, and Pseudo-Mark). There was a difficulty in the persistent tradition that the disciples did not realize the

good news for some time ('Peter'), but that might be explained by their incredulity (Luke and Pseudo-Mark) and in time it was forgotten (Matthew, John). In all the gospel accounts of the women's visit two elements only are required to explain the genesis of the narratives—a knowledge of the primitive tradition outlined above, and a belief that Jesus had risen from the dead. We suggest that it was an accident that those two elements were brought together; the evidence of the women was not the foundation of the Church's faith in the resurrection, but their story gained a new significance through its being interpreted in the light of that belief. Hence all the modifications in the five gospels arose, and only the earliness of Mark and his faithfulness to his sources enable us to understand what the original tradition was. Luke and John differ more widely than Mark and 'Peter' from the earliest account, which fact is to be explained by their acceptance of the Jerusalem tradition the genesis of which we have already discussed.

CHAPTER VII

THE GROWTH OF TRADITION—II

The Appearances of the Risen Lord

IT has proved a fairly easy task to trace the growth of tradition as to the women's visit to the tomb, because we have in Mark a very early though not a primitive form of the story. Had we only possessed the other gospels, the reconstruction which we have attempted would have been impossible. For example, the relationship of Luke to Matthew can only be perceived through a study of Mark.

In the investigation which now lies before us, the guidance of Mark is lacking, and the loss is irreparable. We have in the gospels of Matthew, Luke, and John stories which differ from one another in every particular, and we have lost the early account which would probably have given us some idea of the primitive tradition of which the surviving traditions are more or less independent developments.

Our only course is to try to gain by inference some idea as to the contents of Mark's lost conclusion. From two sources we may derive valuable hints. In the first place Mark xvi. 7 is surely an anticipation of what was to follow. 'Go ye, tell his disciples and Peter that he goeth before you into Galilee; there ye will see him, as he said unto you.' It has been argued above that this verse had no place in the earliest tradition, but there

can be no question that it is part of the author's work. He would not have included it unless it fitted the narrative with which he was about to conclude. We may draw three inferences: (1) That Mark's conclusion contained, or would have contained if it had ever been written, an account of an appearance to the disciples in Galilee. That was the content of the tradition with which Mark was familiar. (2) The special mention of Peter is a clear indication that he was prominent in what was to follow: either Mark intended to relate an appearance to Peter alone, or he was going to represent Peter as more prominent than the rest on the occasion of the Lord's appearance to all the disciples. (3) The appearance in Galilee was certainly the first appearance known to Mark, and perhaps he knew of one only. On the last point no emphasis can be laid: 'There ye shall see him' is slightly suggestive of a single occasion, such as Matthew relates, but we cannot be sure. It is, however, perfectly clear that Mark knew nothing of any appearance earlier than that he was about to relate as taking place in Galilee. Had he been aware of any appearance in Jerusalem before the departure of the disciples he could not have written 'He goeth before you into Galilee; there (ἐκεῖ—emphatic) ye shall see him.'

The second source which may help us in reconstructing Mark's conclusion is the despised Gospel of Peter.[1] Most scholars have been so much influenced by the idea that Peter is a late harmony of the four canonical gospels that they have not availed themselves of the help which

[1] I hope Canon Streeter will reconsider his dictum that 'the Gospel of Peter can in no way be regarded as an independent historical authority' (*The Four Gospels*, p. 354). The whole question of the relation of 'Peter' to the canonical gospels is discussed at length by the present author in the *Journal of Theological Studies*, April 1926.

the Petrine fragment has to offer. If, as I believe, 'Peter' is a first-century authority who wrote quite independently of any of the canonical evangelists, he may be a most valuable witness to early traditions which in the four gospels have become modified or even forgotten. This is just the kind of situation in which 'Peter' may help. Mark's ending is lost, and with it his evidence of early tradition; Matthew is brief and somewhat vague, not having had the advantage of Mark's guidance, and apparently possessing very little other information; Luke and John have made shipwreck on the Jerusalem tradition; only 'Peter' and the appendix to John remain, and the latter is very late. Let us turn to 'Peter.'

'Now it was the last day of unleavened bread and many went out of the city returning to their homes since the feast was at an end. But we the twelve disciples of the Lord were weeping and grieving, and each being grieved for that which was come to pass departed to his home.'

'And I Simon Peter and Andrew my brother took our nets and went to the sea; and there was with us Levi, the son of Alphæus, whom the Lord . . .'

Was there ever a more exasperating ending?[1] And yet it is better to use what remains than to complain that there is not more. If the substance of Mark's ending exists anywhere in the world it is here. Allowing, of course, for the change to the first person singular, does not this fragment embody just what Mark's ending might be expected to contain? Not that 'Peter' had read the end or any other part of Mark, but he was in touch with the same circle of tradition as that on which Mark relied, and in this concluding section their information seems to have been very similar. It is to be noted that

[1] Mark's excepted.

in the preceding passage 'Peter' has the declaration of the angel substantially as it appears in Mark, but without Mark's addition of a message to the disciples. Here he goes on in the same sober strain. He does not indulge his taste for miracles, there are no rending heavens, no colossal angels, no marvels of any kind, only a picture of a band of sorrow-stricken disciples creeping sadly to their homes. That this is utterly inconsistent with the earlier and obviously legendary portion of his narrative is a very good reason for supposing it to be primitive. 'Peter' gives us the invaluable information that (1) the disciples stayed in Jerusalem until the end of the feast, (2) they went home uncheered by any suspicion that the resurrection had taken place.[1]

We cannot prove that this is the continuation contemplated by Mark, but it seems extremely probable. 'Peter,' in the concluding section of his narrative, follows a very early form of the tradition, a form similar to Mark's, though in some respects earlier. Mark also is not far from primitive tradition, exhibiting only the first signs of the development which is patent in Matthew, Luke, and John. Then the probability is considerable that 'Peter' and Mark had nearly the same story to tell. Certainly 'Peter's' narrative follows easily on the concluding words of Mark. 'They told nothing to any man, for they feared (? the chief priests). Now it was the last day of the unleavened bread, and a good many were going out returning to their homes. And the disciples were weeping and grieving, and each of them, grieved at what had come to pass, departed to his home.'

[1] And yet Robinson and James could say, 'The unmistakable acquaintance of the author with our four Evangelists deserves special comment. He uses and misuses each in turn' (p. 32). Misuses indeed if he derived the above information from any of our gospels!

The sequence is perfect. It is quite likely that Mark, influenced by the later tradition that the resurrection was now known at least to the women, laid less emphasis upon the grief of the disciples, but everything points to the conclusion that he represented the disciples as journeying homeward before any further manifestation had occurred.

And here I must part company with Professor Lake and other critics, who think that the earliest tradition represented the disciples as fleeing to their homes immediately after the arrest of Jesus. This suggestion seems intrinsically improbable, and against the evidence. In its favour are quoted Mark xiv. 27, 'I will smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered,' and Mark xiv. 50, 'And leaving him they all fled.' The support of these passages appears to me very feeble; even when they are combined with the omission of all mention of the disciples at the trial and crucifixion of Jesus, all they amount to is a tradition that the disciples deserted Jesus and scattered among the crowds in Jerusalem. On the day before the feast the most conspicuous thing they could have done would have been to leave Jerusalem, and journey in a direction opposite to the stream of traffic. Probably travelling sixty miles during the feast would have been a difficult if not an impossible undertaking. Why should they try? A man who wishes to hide himself generally chooses a crowded city, and it must have been easy for a dozen Galileans to escape notice among the enormous population of Jerusalem at the Passover season. Besides, it may be doubted whether the notion of turning his back upon the Holy City at the beginning of the feast would ever occur to a Jew.

Against the idea of the flight of the disciples must be placed the plain testimony of 'Peter' who, as we have

more than once insisted, was here relying upon a very early tradition current before the Jerusalem tradition became known. If it was ever known that the disciples ran away from Jerusalem before the sabbath, it is difficult to see how the idea arose at an early date that they lingered in the city for a whole week. Certainly not to make them witnesses of an appearance in Jerusalem, for 'Peter' knows no such tradition. Lake suggests that here we have the true explanation of the silence of the women, they told no one because there was no one to tell. It seems much more probable that they told no one because they had nothing worth telling until their experiences had been interpreted in the light of later beliefs. Even though some of the disciples left Jerusalem there must have remained in Jerusalem a few of the friends of Jesus to whom they could have spoken if they had wished. The disciples may have deserted Jesus, but they can hardly be supposed to have deserted all their womenfolk.

Everything therefore points to the conclusion that 'Peter' represents the substance of Mark's lost verses, so far as the statement about the disciples' sojourn in Jerusalem is concerned. The earliest tradition described a stay of the eleven in the Holy City until the end of the feast, after which they retired to their homes.

What happened then? It is clear that 'Peter' went on to describe an appearance of the risen Lord to Simon Peter and other disciples by the Lake of Galilee. That Mark had a similar story is probable on general grounds, but we have no positive evidence; in this connection Luke xxiv. and John xx. give us no help because they have abandoned the Galilee tradition altogether, and Matthew has only a story of an appearance 'on the mountain where Jesus appointed them.' There remain only the narrative of John xxi. and the story of Jesus'

walking on the water (Mark vi. 45 ff., Matt, xiv. 22 ff., John vi. 16 ff.).

A comparison of the various narratives of Jesus' appearing to the disciples on or beside the lake may perhaps be useful (p. 147).

We have already seen good reason to suspect that the narrative of John xxi. is a blending of three stories,[1] the story of the miraculous draught of fishes which is somehow connected with Simon Peter, a story of the appearance of the risen Lord to the disciples by the lake, and a story of a eucharistic meal at which Jesus presides. In the second of these stories, Peter is specially prominent. It is he who suggests the expedition, it is he who jumps into the water to meet the risen Lord, and in the sequel the conversation is addressed to Peter; that he was also prominent in the story of the miraculous draught may partly account for the confusion of the two stories. Here our concern is only with the appearance of the Lord, and it is hard to resist the suspicion that the accounts in the other gospels of Jesus' walking on the water have been influenced by the tradition of the appearance of the risen Jesus, even if they did not spring from it as their only source. No doubt there are differences. In the earlier stories the boat is in the middle of the lake, in this narrative it is near the shore. In the earlier stories, Jesus is on the water (ἐπὶ τῆς θαλάσσης), in this he is on the beach. In the earlier stories the time is about 3 a.m., in this it is about daybreak. But these are minor points, the general picture is very much the same. The weary disciples are in a boat on the lake; suddenly in the semi-darkness they see a mysterious figure, like a ghost; at first they do not know who it is, until Jesus speaks or one of them recognizes him; then,

[1] *Supra*, pp. 91 ff.

MATTHEW xiv.	MARK vi.	JOHN vi.	JOHN xxi.	PETER.
The boat was now many furlongs from the shore, tossed by the waves. In the fourth watch of the night he came to them walking on the sea. And the disciples seeing him were terrified, and said, It is a spirit.	Much as in Matthew. 'And he would have passed by them.'	When they had rowed twenty-five or thirty furlongs, they see Jesus walking on the sea and drawing nigh unto the boat.	Simon Peter, Thomas, Nathanael, the sons of Zebedee, and two others go fishing. At daybreak Jesus stood on the beach. The disciples did not know him. Jesus saith, Children, have ye no meat? They answered, No.	Simon Peter and his brother Andrew took their nets and went to the sea. And there was with them Levi the son of Alphæus.
And they cried out for fear. But Jesus said immediately, Take courage, it is I. Fear not.	They all saw him and were afraid.	And they were afraid. But he saith unto them, It is I, fear not.	Jesus instructs them how to fish, and a great catch is made. The Beloved Disciple saith unto Peter, It is the Lord!	
Then follows the account of Peter's asking permission to walk to Jesus, of his failure and rescue. Jesus rebukes his unbelief and they are taken into the boat. The disciples worship saying, Truly thou art Son of God.			Simon Peter plunges into the water. There follows a meal of bread and fish.	

according to Matthew and John, Peter leaves the boat and plunges into the water to meet the Lord.

If Mark's lost conclusion or the Petrine gospel had an account of the restoration of the penitent 'Peter' combining the main features of these two narratives, what a dramatic story it must have been! The dim light, the mysterious vision, the sudden recognition, the impetuous plunge of Peter, the tender reception, and the loving restoration followed by some conversation resembling that recorded in John xxi. 15 ff. Could Mark have had a better climax, a more fitting conclusion to his gospel?

Tentatively we may believe that he wrote, or intended to write, something of the kind, and though his narrative is lost, vague remnants of the tradition with which he was acquainted survive in the passages set forth above. There has been much confusion. One tradition failed to recognize that the mysterious appearance of Jesus occurred after the resurrection and not at some time in the Galilean ministry. Another tradition confused Peter's call with his restoration, and so the story of the miraculous draught previously attached to the call of Simon was confused with the later story. The names of his companions were forgotten.[1] Finally, in John's narrative the appearance by the lake is blended with another tradition of a post-resurrection eucharist which has left more than one trace in the gospels.[2] These are disturbing elements which make any detailed reconstruction of the narrative impossible, but they do not lessen the probability that here we have in broad outline the earliest tradition of the first appearance of the risen Jesus to his

[1] The list in 'Peter' seems primitive rather than that in John.

[2] It is obvious that John's story does not reproduce the tradition in its original form. Peter jumps into the water and no more is said of him, because the conclusion of the narrative has been lost in the addition of the story of the sacred meal (*supra*, p. 91).

disciples; this is the story that Mark and 'Peter' went on to relate, and to which Mark xvi. 7 was introductory; this is the foundation of St. Paul's statement that he appeared (first) to Cephas.

The greatest difficulty is to account for its absence from Matthew. It is very unlikely that Matthew had the conclusion of Mark before him, but it seems strange that he should have been ignorant of this narrative if it was so prominent in the earliest tradition. The silence of Luke and John presents less difficulty, for they have deliberately chosen the Jerusalem tradition which took the place of the Galilee stories; but Matthew is equally ignorant of any tradition relating to appearances in Judæa (save only xxviii. 9), why then does he substitute for the original tradition of an appearance to Peter and his friends another story of an appearance to the eleven on a mountain?

The question cannot be answered with any certainty. It might be suggested that the author of the first gospel knew both stories, and being unwilling, perhaps for lack of room, to include both, chose the story of the final withdrawal of Jesus as providing a more fitting conclusion to the gospel. There is a good deal to be said for this suggestion, but against it may be quoted the wording of the Matthean narrative. 'But the eleven disciples went into Galilee unto a mountain where Jesus had appointed them. And when they saw him they worshipped him; but some doubted.' It is difficult to believe that the evangelist who wrote those words knew that the disciples had already seen the risen Master. The impression created is that he imagined himself to be describing the first and last appearance of the Lord. If so, we can only conclude that for some reason the early tradition known to St. Paul, Mark, 'Peter,' and the author of John xxi.

never reached the ears of the writer of the first gospel. The fact creates serious difficulties, but we must not make too much of them. We know so little of the personality of 'Matthew' or of the material at his disposal that we cannot say that such ignorance would be impossible. A comparison of the matter peculiar to the first gospel with that peculiar to the third is enough to prove that, apart from his two main sources, 'Matthew' had been able to gather very little reliable information. Possibly he lived in some remote village where information was not easily obtained, and for that reason he had never received a clear account of the appearance by the lake. We cannot be sure, but the fact that he did not know anything about it warns us how vague and uncertain was the state of tradition in the third quarter of the first century.[1]

So much, then, for the earliest tradition of an appearance of the risen Lord of which we have any trace. In all probability it described an occurrence by the Lake of Galilee in which Peter was specially concerned.

But was this the only appearance known to the earliest tradition? Again our authorities do not make possible a certain answer, but there are other narratives whose claims to antiquity deserve respectful consideration. Matthew's story is one. If at a time when the primitive tradition of the appearance by the lake was not universally known Matthew learnt a tradition of an appearance on a mountain, this latter tradition must be very early, no later perhaps than the story of the appearance by the lake. We have no reason to assume that Matthew

[1] If the first gospel was written in and for one of the great Churches, such as Antioch, as Streeter suggests, the difficulty of accounting for the author's ignorance on so important a point is greatly increased. But there are no very strong grounds for accepting this theory. It is probable that a great Church accepted the gospel, but it may have been written elsewhere.

reproduces it in the earliest form, but even as it stands it has marks of an early date.

1. The journey to Galilee follows upon the events of the first day of the week. An interval is not excluded, but no important occurrence, such as an appearance in Jerusalem, can be supposed to have taken place.

2. That 'some doubted' looks like a genuine reminiscence. Doubt about the identity of the risen Lord would not be introduced by a later romancer unless it was to be set at rest by some indisputable proof such as that given to Thomas.

3. 'All authority hath been given me in heaven and on earth' need be no later than St. Paul, and it may be an attempt to express the idea of the ascension at a time when the Lucan story was unknown.

4. As to the missionary charge we have already seen [1] that some such tradition was widespread at an early date. Luke and John incorporate it though their source was not this narrative in its Matthean form.

Against these indications of an early date must be placed the mention of baptism in the name of the Trinity. We need not commit ourselves to the theory that this was no part of the original text of the gospel, but it may have been no part of the original tradition. 'Matthew' himself would have no hesitation in bringing his source into agreement with the custom with which he was familiar.

On these grounds I suggest that the first gospel has preserved another very early tradition of an appearance of the risen Christ. The author was wrong in assuming that this was the first appearance of Jesus, but he may have been nearer the truth in representing it as the last. Matthew xxviii. 16–20 gives us one account, and a very

[1] *Supra*, pp. 62 73, 83.

early one, of the farewell of the risen Jesus to his disciples. It has no obvious parallel in any of the other gospels, but we must now consider whether the other evangelists present narratives which may conceivably be developed versions of the same tradition.

Luke xxiv. 36–53 is the first passage to be examined. Here Jesus appears to 'the eleven and them that were with them' in Jerusalem on the evening of the first day of the week. They are terrified, supposing that they behold a spirit. Jesus proves his identity by shewing his hands and his feet, and inviting the disciples to handle him. They are still incredulous for joy, and Jesus gives a further proof of his substantiality by eating before them. There follows an argument that 'all things written in the law of Moses and in the Prophets and in the Psalms concerning me must be fulfilled.' Then the disciples understand that it was written that the Christ must suffer and rise from the dead on the third day, and that repentance must be preached in his name unto all nations. Then come the commission 'Ye are my witnesses,' and a promise of the gift of the Spirit. Finally, Luke concludes with a brief account of the separation of Jesus from the disciples.

We have already seen reason for rejecting the claim of this narrative as it stands to represent a primitive tradition. The 'Jerusalem tradition' thus embodied cannot be defended against the overwhelming evidence that the first appearances of Jesus were originally believed to have taken place in Galilee. A closer examination of the Lucan account confirms our general impression that here we have a narrative which has undergone considerable development. The surprise and terror of the disciples are out of place considering that according to Luke they had just been declaring to the two from

Emmaus 'The Lord is risen indeed and hath appeared unto Simon.' So is their idea that they beheld 'a spirit.' If the risen Jesus had already appeared to Simon and to the two, and if the women had already announced the resurrection, an appearance to the other disciples might be confidently expected. The fact seems to be that we have here survivals of the story in an earlier form. The disciples in Galilee, ignorant as yet of the resurrection, might well be frightened at the sight of a mysterious figure by the lake or on the mountain-side, they might suppose that they saw a spirit (Luke πνεῦμα, cf. Matt. xiv. 26, φάντασμά ἐστιν), on the mountain some might doubt (cf. Luke xxiv. 38, 'Why do questionings arise in your heart?') But Luke does not realize how out of place these things are in the account as he gives it. To the critic they are of great importance, for they go far to establish the theory that the whole passage is a tradition of an appearance in Galilee transferred to Jerusalem.

The account as it appears in Luke has suffered not only from transplantation, but also from combination. Just as John combined his story of the appearance of Jesus by the lake with a tradition of a sacred meal, so Luke[1] combines the story of the first appearance to the disciples with a similar tradition of a meal. Here, however, it is given a different significance. The belief that Jesus presided over a meal becomes a belief that he partook of solid food, and the resulting tradition is used to support the theory that the risen body was a body of flesh and bones. We can dimly trace the growth of the tradition. At first it was narrated that the disciples on seeing Jesus

[1] By 'Luke' I mean throughout the tradition which Luke the evangelist embodies. Perhaps he did little more than incorporate tradition in that state of development in which he found it. When he wrote Acts new material was available.

in the faint light of dawn thought that they saw a ghost (any ghost) until Jesus established his identity. This fact was remembered even when the circumstances became doubtful, when some spoke of an appearance of Jesus during the ministry, some located the appearance on a mountain, and some spoke of a room in Jerusalem. In time it acquired a new significance. There were two ideas of the resurrection. According to one, the risen Jesus possessed a 'spiritual body,' something like that with which St. Paul hoped to be clothed, a body which could walk on water, appear and vanish at will, a body which must not be touched by human hands. But in time another idea replaced this primitive notion. The risen body of Jesus was solid, made of flesh and bones, able to assimilate food, to be felt and handled. For those who held this latter view the denial that the risen Jesus was a ghost attained a new significance; it meant that his solidity rather than his identity was established. Luke exhibits a curious confusion. The disciples are frightened because they think they see a ghost (any ghost). They are not terrified at the thought that Jesus is appearing in ghostly form, they are afraid because they are not sure of his identity. Accordingly Jesus sets their fears at rest by displaying his hands and his feet ὅτι ἐγώ εἰμι αὐτός. So far, so good. But then Luke goes on to establish the totally different and here irrelevant point that Jesus was in bodily and not in spiritual form. 'Feel me, and see, because a spirit hath not flesh and bones as ye see me to have.' This is a doublet of the words just recorded, but a doublet intended to establish a wholly different point. In this form it is a perversion of the earlier tradition made under the influence of dogmatic theory.

I have already protested against the almost universal custom of referring to Luke as anti-docetic. Docetism

was a theory that Jesus Christ never came in the flesh, but that his body was only apparent. Against such ideas John bears his testimony. Luke's anxiety is altogether different; he insists that *after the resurrection* Jesus had something more than a merely spiritual body, that he was not a ghost, but that his flesh and bones were risen from the grave. The point has nothing to do with the docetic heresy, it is a question of the two views of the nature of the resurrection body which were current in the first century, and, we may add, are current to-day.

If the earliest tradition founded the faith in the resurrection not upon the story of the empty tomb, which was unknown, but upon the mysterious appearances of Jesus, then the idea of the risen Jesus as possessed of an immaterial or semi-material body would come naturally enough; but there are always materialists who cannot imagine personal survival without flesh and bones, and owing partly to the accident of the misinterpretation of the women's story their influence became supreme. Luke's view that the risen Lord had a solid body which could be fed and handled, the very body which Joseph laid in the tomb, became the unquestioned belief of the Christian Church. St. Paul's protest that flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God was very soon disregarded.

However this may be, it seems clear that quite apart from the question of the relative merits of the Galilee and the Jerusalem traditions, Luke's story as it stands betrays signs of development. It does not fit into the scheme of the narrative of chapter xxiv., and it gives a later meaning to the action of Jesus in shewing his body to the disciples.

There is another indication that Luke's story is not original in its present sequence. About sunset the two

disciples are at Emmaus. They take part in a meal and walk four miles back to Jerusalem, so that they cannot have reached the other disciples much earlier than nine o'clock. There follows a conversation with the eleven, the appearance of Jesus, and a two-mile walk out to Bethany. Midnight must have been near when the final separation took place. It does not seem probable.

The first part of the ensuing conversation Luke seems to have derived from some source particularly interested in proving that the death and resurrection of Christ were in fulfilment of prophecy. In the story of the women the prophet is Jesus himself (verse 6), in the story of the walk to Emmaus and in the present passage the appeal is to the Jewish scriptures.[1] It is not a point in which Luke the Gentile is likely to have been specially interested, and we may therefore infer with some confidence that he derived all these three stories, or at least the last two, from a single authority. That carries the Jerusalem tradition one stage further back.[2]

To return to the relationship of this narrative to that of Matthew, the following points of similarity may be noted:

1. Both appearances are to the eleven.
2. In both there is at first some doubt as to the identity of Jesus.
3. Both are obviously intended to be understood as first and last appearances to the eleven.
4. Both refer to the future work of the Church;

[1] xxiv. 44 combines the other two passages; Jesus reminds them of his previous appeal to the Jewish scriptures.

[2] I do not wish to press this point. In the second century, at any rate, there were many Gentile converts (e.g. Justin Martyr) who were keenly interested in prophecy. But by that time Christian apologetic had had more time to develop.

Matthew speaks of baptism, Luke of the preaching of repentance, but the two subjects were closely connected in the mind of the early Church.

5. Both passages contain a promise: Matthew—'Lo I am with you all the days unto the end of the age': Luke—'Behold I send forth the promise of my Father upon you—ye shall be endued with power from on high.' The difference belongs only to the sphere of dogmatic theology, the thought is the same.
6. In both narratives there is mention of a mountain. This is very suggestive. Matthew believes that the final scene took place on a mountain in Galilee. Luke follows the Jerusalem tradition. But the tradition that Jesus bade farewell to his disciples on a mountain still lingers, and since the Mount of Olives is the most notable mountain in the neighbourhood of Jerusalem, this mount becomes the scene of the occurrence. In the gospel we read of Bethany, in the Acts of the mount called Olivet, but Bethany was on Olivet and it comes to the same thing.

Collectively these points of similarity are strongly in favour of the suggestion that Luke is giving a later version of the tradition with which Matthew ends his gospel, and that, dissimilar as his narrative appears at first sight, it is in fact an additional testimony to the existence of an early tradition that Jesus bade farewell to his disciples on a mountain in Galilee. The same may be said of Acts i. 6–11, but since this story is obviously a developed version of the narrative in Luke its testimony is secondary and cannot be quoted as independent.

There is not much evidence that the author of the

fourth gospel had read St. Luke's gospel, so that the occurrence of the same narrative in John is further evidence that the tradition was well known. John xx. 19–23 corresponds very closely with Luke xxiv. 36–49. The disciples are gathered together in Jerusalem on the first day of the week, Jesus suddenly appears and shows to them his hands and his side, whereupon the disciples are glad as they recognize the Lord. Jesus gives them a commission which is vaguely expressed, and imparts to them the Holy Spirit with the authority to forgive sins.

All the essentials of Luke's narrative are here except (1) the account of the Lord's eating, which, as we have seen, had no place in the original tradition, and (2) the final withdrawal of Jesus from his disciples. The latter omission is immediately due to the fact that John has a further appearance to relate, but his complete omission of any description of the ascension is one of the mysteries of the gospel.[1] It would seem, then, that John used Matthew's story of the appearance to the eleven in the form which it assumed after it had been transferred to Jerusalem, but without some of the elements combined with it by Luke. If it be true that Luke is a witness to Matthew's early tradition of an appearance on a mountain, it is equally true that John supports his testimony. It may seem strange that one story should be quoted in support of the early existence of another, but examination makes it plain that we have not here two stories, much less three or four, but one story in various phases of development. Luke xxiv. 36 ff., John xx. 19 ff., and Acts i. 6 ff., are all editions of the very early tradition contained in Matt. xxviii 16 ff.

[1] Is it possible that an account of the ascension originally followed the story of the appearance to Thomas, and that it was cut out to make room for chapter xxi ?

We may now return to the question from which we started, the lost conclusion of Mark. We have seen strong reasons for believing that it contained a story of the appearance of Jesus to his disciples by the Lake of Galilee, may we not also believe that it contained a narrative of a second appearance on a mountain in which Jesus took leave of his disciples and gave them their commission? The argument for two Galilean appearances in the lost conclusion is not so strong as the argument for one, since the hints in Mark are satisfied by one appearance in which Peter was concerned, and here we have no help from the Gospel of Peter, but Matthew provides positive proof that such a tradition was in existence a few years later, and Luke and John are witnesses that it was strong enough to survive transplantation to Jerusalem. Nor is it easy to suggest any reason for its invention. Interest soon became concentrated upon the Jerusalem tradition and any elaboration would centre round the belief that Jesus parted from his disciples in Judæa; it is not very probable that any one would invent another appearance in forgotten Galilee. Finally, it is only reasonable to suppose that Mark would give some description of the last appearance of Jesus to the disciples and of his instructions for the future. All the traditions we know contained some account of this commission, and it is most probable that Mark had something of the kind. But it is not probable that he connected the final leave-taking with the appearance by the lake. So far as we can judge the purpose of that appearance was the restoration of Peter, and the one account which survives gives no hint of a farewell message. In Matthew, Luke, and John the leave-taking is connected with the other appearance to the eleven, of which it is the chief feature. So probably it was in Mark. The appearance by the lake

and the appearance on the mountain refuse to coalesce, they are distinct traditions representing respectively the first and the last appearances of the risen Lord, and so in all probability they were in the earliest tradition. We cannot prove that Mark's gospel contained both, indeed we cannot prove that it contained either, but if it was ever the artistic whole which it seems to promise, if it remained to the end the best embodiment of early tradition, it must have recorded not one but two appearances of the risen Lord, corresponding in some degree to the narratives of John xxi. and Matt. xxviii. 16–20.

There is one other narrative of an appearance of the risen Lord which, although it has small claims to have been included in Mark's lost conclusion, may yet have formed part of the very early tradition of the Church, and that is the narrative of the appearance to the two disciples on the road to Emmaus.

As the story appears in Luke, it is closely connected with the Jerusalem tradition and must therefore be accepted with reserve, but it is possible that it was not originally so connected, and there are several positive indications that Luke has forced it into a context which it does not fit. The mention in verse 34 of an appearance unto Simon has given much trouble to commentators, and the difficulty has led to the substitution of λέγοντες for λέγοντας in the Western text. But the explanation is not far to seek. The incident was originally related as occurring after the appearance to Simon in Galilee which was so prominent in the earliest tradition, and the confusion has resulted from the ante-dating of the narrative in Luke. We have already referred more than once to the difficulty of finding room for all the events of Luke xxiv. 13–end on one evening, the difficulty

disappears if we suppose that Luke has made a mistake in connecting the appearance to the two with the appearance to the eleven. Even Luke realized at a later time that he was wrong in supposing that the appearances of the risen Lord were limited to a single day.[1]

This, then, is the first point. Luke, or his source, has taken a detached story and put it into a wrong context, it does not therefore stand or fall with the Jerusalem tradition.

But this is a narrative which cannot have been transplanted; Emmaus was not in Galilee, and if the appearance took place at Emmaus this cannot be a Galilean tradition which the evangelist has altered to suit his views of the resurrection. Nor have we the slightest trace of any Galilean tradition of which this could be an adaptation. Either it is a free invention of Christian imagination, or it is what it claims to be, an account of an historical occurrence in Judæa. Whichever view we adopt no proof is possible, for here is a single story which is not supported in any of our other sources.[2] It is difficult to account for the fact that neither St. Paul nor St. John had heard of this appearance, and it has left no trace on any other New Testament book. And yet it does not read like a romance. What Christian imagination could do we see in the Gospel of Peter, and in certain passages of Matthew; but this beautiful story is different; it is sober, graphic, and yet instinct with the air of mysticism; it seems hardly possible to dismiss it as an invention. Who possessed the imagination to invent such a tale as this? We feel that it must be founded on fact, and that its disappearance from later tradition was due to some accident which we cannot trace.

[1] Acts i. 3.

[2] Except, of course, Mark xvi. 12, which is secondary.

Let us note its main features again. Two Judean disciples, little known to the Galileans, are on their way into the country. Sorrowing at all that has happened, they talk earnestly of the death of Jesus and of the end of all their hopes. Then a stranger comes and comforts them by opening to them the scriptures, and finally he is known to them as Jesus while he breaks bread in their house.

How much better this story combines with the earliest tradition as we have it in 'Peter,' than with the more developed form in Luke! The sadness of the disciples immediately recalls 'Peter's' 'weeping and mourning and being grieved at that which had come to pass each went to his home.' There is no joy at the resurrection. Luke laboriously explains that the disciples had refused to believe the women's story, but a much more obvious explanation is that of Mark and 'Peter' that they had not heard it. The passage Luke xxiv. 21*b*–24 (? 27) looks very much like an addition by the evangelist made under the influence of his earlier narrative. If, indeed, the women's story had been confirmed by 'certain of our company' (a late addition to tradition appearing otherwise only in John), then the description of the saddened disciples as 'fools and slow of heart' was not unjustified. The introduction of this mention of the empty tomb not only contradicts the earlier tradition of Mark, but it spoils the present story. It can hardly be doubted that in its original form this narrative related an appearance to two disciples who were sad because they had never heard of the resurrection. The feast was over and they were going back to their homes, just as 'Peter's' tradition says they did. If so, this is a strong reason for placing the narrative in a very early stratum of tradition, the same stratum which contained the final section of 'Peter,'

and Mark xvi. 1–9 before the addition of ἠγέρθη and the message of the young man to the disciples. This tradition we may well call primitive. In support of such a date, we may refer to the early features already noticed,[1] the description of Jesus as ἀνὴρ προφήτης δυνατὸς ἐν ἔργῳ καὶ λόγῳ ἐναντίον τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ παντὸς τοῦ λαοῦ, and the frank confession, 'But we were hoping that it was he that would redeem Israel.'

As the narrative stands in Luke its main purpose seems to be to insist upon the fulfilment of Old Testament prophecy. This particular source of Luke's was chiefly concerned to establish such a theory, and it is possible that the account of Jesus' interpreting to them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself owes its position to the peculiar interests of Luke's source. It cannot be doubted that the early Church was deeply concerned to establish the argument from prophecy, and the form of this narrative may be due to an anxiety to represent Jesus himself as supporting the Christian method of interpretation. Knowing what we do of the argument from scripture as it was understood in the first two centuries, we would rather think that in this matter Luke was misled by his source.

Certainly if the verses describing the conversation between Jesus and the two were omitted in the earliest form of the tradition, it would be clearer that the significance of the whole incident was the announcement of the resurrection to these disciples. We should expect that to come first. Whatever importance might eventually attach to the right understanding of the Old Testament, the first thing necessary at that time was to convince the disciples that the resurrection had taken place. In the narrative as it stands its evidential value drops into

[1] *Supra*, p. 68.

the background, but if as it was originally told everything centred on the sudden disclosure by the stranger of his identity, the significance of the incident would be clear and unmistakable. The point cannot be pressed, for there is no evidence in favour of this suggestion, but it seems possible that the narrative has undergone a certain amount of development in the interests of dogmatic theory.

We can hardly doubt that the incident of the meal was always an integral part of this narrative, for if that be omitted the story has no climax, no conclusion. 'It came to pass as he sat at meat with them, he took the bread and blessed and brake and gave to them; and their eyes were opened and they recognized him.' The whole narrative has been leading up to that.

Have we here another primitive tradition? The question is difficult to answer, because, as we have said, there is no other evidence of the existence of this tradition. But we are not justified in rejecting it solely on that account. Against the historicity of legends it is generally possible to urge definite objections. There is no reason, so far as we know, why this story should not be true. Even if we grant the general correctness of the Galilee tradition, and admit that Matthew, Mark, and 'Peter' are right against Luke and John in putting the first appearances of Jesus to his disciples in Galilee, yet there is no reason why there should not also have been appearances in Judæa. Probably some of the followers of Jesus lived in Judæa, and it is arbitrary to deny that they may have had experiences similar to those of their brethren in Galilee. There is the further point that after a sojourn in Galilee the disciples undoubtedly returned to Jerusalem. This story must stand or fall on its own merits, but our investigation has provided no *a priori*

reason for doubting its general historicity, and intrinsically it has strong claims to be regarded as founded upon fact.

One point deserves consideration. We have seen that in several strata of tradition there lingered a belief that the risen Jesus presided over his disciples in a common meal. So says the appendix to John, so says Luke, though in xxiv. 42 he mentions the fact with a definite purpose. There are good reasons for supposing that neither Luke nor John mentions the meal in the right connection. Luke is misled by his so-called 'anti-docetic tendencies,' but since the unsubstantiality of Jesus was not in question, his refutation of it was irrelevant. John leaves the impression that he is spoiling an early tradition of the restoration of Peter by introducing in its wrong place a floating tradition about a eucharistic meal. What is the right place for this tradition? I suggest that it had its origin in the narrative of the meal at Emmaus. This suggestion is no more than a guess, but it is in accordance with two facts—(1) that there was an early belief that Jesus had presided over a meal, though there was no agreement as to time and place; (2) that the Emmaus tradition was not widely known. It is possible that everything was forgotten except the fact that Jesus had presided at a eucharist, then the attempt had to be made to fit it in amongst the other traditions. Luke represents one attempt, John represents another; Luke's second narrative is substantially historical and the tradition it contains is the origin of his earlier account. On the other hand the possibility that Jesus presided over more than one meal must not be forgotten.

On the whole it seems probable that the narrative of the walk to Emmaus, or, as we should prefer to call it, the meal at Emmaus, is a fragment of primitive tradition. It recounts, with whatever degree of accuracy, an experi-

ence which two Judean disciples had at some period after the crucifixion. The Lucan 'on that very day' is certainly a mistake, and the most probable date seems to be some two or three weeks later, just at the time when the disciples were returning from Galilee. The two hastened to Jerusalem, where they knew they would meet some of the Lord's disciples—Judeans for the most part, for they would not know that the Galileans were returning. There they told their story, announced their conviction that Jesus had risen, and were answered by the reassuring response 'The Lord is risen indeed and hath appeared unto Simon.' Some of the disciples had returned from Galilee and brought the news. As time passed the more public appearances of Jesus were chiefly remembered, and this simple narrative was almost forgotten; but the incident of the eucharistic meal appealed to the imagination of the Church, and though its setting was forgotten, the central fact was remembered, and the tradition was combined with such other matter as was available.

There remains but one other narrative of an appearance of Jesus which has not been considered, viz. the appearance to the disciples and Thomas narrated in John xx. 26–29. From the point of view of the development of tradition, little can be said about it, for there is no trace of the story in any of the other gospels, nor is there any other story of which it could conceivably be an alternative version. It is intimately connected with the Jerusalem tradition, for although John does not actually state that this appearance took place in Jerusalem, the inference is that its scene was the same as that of the previous appearance, which is obviously the Holy City. On both occasions the doors were shut because of the Jews, and it was the Jews of Jerusalem whom the disciples had to

fear. The appearance has one object only, the convincing of Thomas, and it is narrated from the standpoint of a time when others have believed in the resurrection (πιστεύσαντες) without ocular demonstration. If this is a genuine historical reminiscence, it is very difficult to imagine any circumstances which might account for the complete disappearance of the story from tradition as known to St. Paul, to Mark, to 'Peter,' to Matthew, and to Luke. Luke does, indeed, know something about an invitation to handle the body of Jesus, but he does not know anything of an appearance a week after the resurrection and he never mentions Thomas.

The story would have been so valuable as a refutation of the suggestion that the appearances of Jesus were hallucinations, that it is almost inconceivable that any evangelist who knew it would have failed to include it in his work, and no argument is needed to prove that it was unknown alike to those evangelists who follow the Galilee tradition, and to Luke, who believed that the 'ascension' took place on the same day as the resurrection. Could any event so important, which took place in the presence of all the disciples, be altogether unknown to all the evangelists fifty years later? If the narrative is unhistorical, it must be supposed to represent an attempt to strengthen the evidence for the resurrection at a time when the Church was experiencing difficulty in convincing the world of the reality of its experiences. Such stories easily grow in seventy or eighty years.

The Jerusalem Tradition

If our investigations and the conclusions to which we have been led are allowed to have any value, it must be admitted that the tradition that the first appearances

of the risen Lord took place in Jerusalem is late and unhistorical. Intrinsic probability strongly favours the account of our earliest sources, and Mark, 'Peter' and Matthew are right as against Luke and John.

The Jerusalem tradition is not without defenders, and Professor Burkitt, in a recent book,[1] has supported it on the ground that the early Church was born and grew in Jerusalem, not in Galilee, as we should have expected if the conviction that Jesus was risen came to the disciples after they had returned to their homes. Professor Burkitt makes the suggestion that the appearance to Simon took place just as he was setting forth for Galilee, and that the *Domine, quo vadis?* story belongs to Jerusalem and not to Rome.

Apart from the difficulty of giving any coherent account of the growth of tradition on the hypothesis of the historicity of the Jerusalem appearances, Professor Burkitt's contention seems open to criticism. The growth of the Church at Jerusalem was due to the fact that the disciples took up their abode in Jerusalem. No one questions that fact, and it amply accounts for the phenomena to which appeal is made. But the continued residence of the disciples in Jerusalem is no harder to explain on one theory than on the other, and it certainly does not prove that they had seen Jesus in Judæa. We do not know why they came back from Galilee; perhaps because they had received a command to do so,[2] or perhaps because they expected the Parousia to take place in the Holy City; but come they did, and no other explanation is needed of the slow growth of the Church in Galilee. On the other hand, if we accept 'the Lucan view that Peter

[1] *Christian Beginnings*, 1924.

[2] Cf. Luke xxiv. 49. 'But do ye remain in the city until ye be endued with power from on high.'

and the little nucleus of believers never got more than a day's journey from Jerusalem between the Crucifixion of Jesus and the Feast of Pentecost,' we are at a loss to explain the Galilee tradition. The insignificance of the Christian Church in Galilee makes it most improbable that a tradition in its favour should have grown up without any historical justification. It is not enough to say that 'it is not quite certain what Mark went on to relate'; it is certain that the Galilee tradition was strong and early, and some explanation of its existence must be forthcoming. The easiest explanation is also the simplest, the Galilee tradition was founded on fact. Nor is it hard to suggest how the Jerusalem tradition came to supplant it. At an early date it was believed that the women found the tomb empty on the first day of the week and that the body of Jesus had risen from the grave. It was also believed that he had shortly afterwards appeared to his disciples. The earliest tradition spoke of an appearance or appearances in Galilee, but surely it was more natural to think that, since the disciples were still in Jerusalem on the first day of the week, and since Jesus was not far away, he appeared to them in Jerusalem. The transference would be almost inevitable, and when it had been made the details would be supplied from the already existing stories relating to Galilee, with only such modifications as the alteration of time and place required. This seems to be exactly what happened, and fully explains the similarities already noticed between the narratives of Luke and John on the one hand and the narratives of Matthew and the Johannine appendix on the other. In the years which followed Jerusalem was the centre of the Christian Church, and interest would naturally be concentrated upon narratives which had Jerusalem for their stage. We cannot be surprised that the Galilee tradition

was soon almost forgotten. Only in Jerusalem itself, where some of the chief actors in the drama lived, would the Galilee tradition be safeguarded, and it is not without significance that the first gospel, which seems to incorporate a source closely connected with the Church of Jerusalem, is wholly loyal to the Galilee tradition. It was the more distant churches which went astray.

The stories of appearances in Jerusalem cannot be accepted as they stand, but it does not follow that they have no historical value. They may still preserve original features which have survived transplantation, and, as we have seen, there is no reason why we should rule out the possibility of any appearances in Judæa. One narrative at least, the tradition of the appearance at Emmaus, has strong claims to be considered primitive, though it has been combined with a certain amount of other material.

CHAPTER VIII

THE FACTS AND THEIR SIGNIFICANCE

WE must now approach a difficult and, in a sense, an impossible task. We have studied the various narratives which bear upon the resurrection of Jesus; we have endeavoured to follow the growth of certain traditions by which may be explained the inconsistency of the narratives as they stand; and we have seen why some traditions have a better claim to be considered primitive than others. We must now turn to the strictly historical task of endeavouring to discover what really happened. How came it about that any traditions of the resurrection arose? The task is difficult, and amid so many uncertainties anything approaching an unassailable conclusion is not to be expected. We cannot be certain who wrote the gospels, or what was the date of their composition. We cannot say with any certainty what were the sources on which the evangelists relied, what facilities they had for collecting information, or what were their individual tastes and abilities. We do not know all the forces at work in the various local Christian communities which influenced the growth of tradition. We cannot always be sure of the true text of our documents, and the exact meaning of certain phrases is open to question. These are only some of the difficulties which confront a historian as he approaches a problem such as this, but they are

enough to rule out any idea of absolute certainty in the conclusions to which he may be led.

And yet it is possible to exaggerate his embarrassments. He need not surrender to those who allege that the difficulties of reaching a satisfactory conclusion are so overwhelming that it is not worth while to make the attempt. History seldom deals with certainties, but history is worthy of study because it establishes probabilities so strong that they may pass as certainties for all practical purposes. In the present case there are elements in the problem which provide a solid basis for research into more questionable matters. One fact which cannot be denied is the existence of the Christian Church. No amount of historical scepticism can dispose of the fact that during the first century there came into existence a small but vigorous society of men and women who bore the name of Christ and who firmly believed that they were enlisted in the service of a living Person who had died and risen from the dead. So much must be admitted. We may differ as to the explanation of the fact, but we cannot deny the fact itself, and those who reject the traditional explanation are bound to suggest some other cause adequate to explain what cannot be denied.

This point deserves to be emphasized. We may love or hate the Christian Church ; we may believe its dogmas or we may despise them ; we may follow its precepts or we may combat them ; but if we seek to explain the Church's existence we must suggest a cause proportionate to the magnitude of the effect. The rise of the Christian Church was a very astonishing thing. It is difficult to imagine anything more intrinsically improbable than the rise in one of the smallest and least esteemed provinces of the Empire of a society destined in three centuries to conquer the Roman world. Yet that is what happened.

Nor is there anything to suggest such a consummation in the earlier gospel history. The earthly ministry of Jesus may be differently represented by different critics: some may see in it an attempt to effect a moral and spiritual reformation within the Jewish Church; some may regard it as a preparation for the miraculous kingdom which was shortly to appear; but the indications that his contemporaries regarded Jesus as engaged in founding a militant society which was to challenge and defeat the world are few indeed. The gospels make it clear that, whatever the attitude of Jesus may have been, the attention of his followers was concentrated upon eschatological hopes to the realization of which their own efforts had little to contribute. They heard and remembered the new ethic; they presumably appreciated the new spirituality which characterized the religious teaching of the Lord; but their expectation was still of the restoration of Israel, their ambition was for seats on the right hand and on the left.

Again, there can be no doubt that to the little band of Jesus' followers the crucifixion was a crushing blow. Luke tells us how sadly the two made their way to Emmaus; 'Peter' represents the disciples as weeping and mourning for a week; and there is nothing in the other gospels to suggest that the twelve were in any way prepared for the actual course of events. And yet the crucifixion, with the events which immediately followed, proved to be the beginning of a triumphant future. For a few days the disciples were scattered as sheep without a shepherd, but very shortly afterwards we find them bearing their joyful witness in Jerusalem; and in fifty years their message had been carried to the furthest bounds of the West. Something must have happened, something unexpected, something sufficiently striking to

change the whole outlook of those who became aware of it, something important enough to account for the sudden appearance and rapid progress of the Christian Church.

Something must have happened. It may be objected that there may have been a mistake, and the effects may have been produced because the disciples thought that something had happened. Up to a point we agree. Taking into account the unscientific character of the age and the uncritical temper of those who first bore witness to their experiences, we may freely admit that the account given by the disciples probably differed not a little from the account which a modern observer would have given had he been a witness of the events described. But this admission by no means invalidates the argument. We do not contend that our documents provide an exact account of the resurrection appearances, but that they supply an explanation which is generally satisfying of the foundation of the Church. Granted inaccuracy in detail and the presence of legend in the records, it may still be asked whether a mistake of sufficient magnitude to account for the facts is even remotely conceivable. The disciples founded the Church because they believed that Jesus was alive ; they believed that he was alive because they believed that they had seen him ; they believed that they had seen him because he had appeared to them and spoken to them, and they had recognized the form and voice of their Master. Could they have been altogether mistaken ? It is not a question of the historicity of this story or of that, of the accuracy of one tradition or of another ; it is a plain, straightforward issue. Can we imagine any conceivable circumstances surrounding an original error which would produce a conviction strong enough to account for the founding

of the Church? We may not have the first-hand accounts of James and John, of Peter and Andrew, but we have the results of their labours, and we can thereby measure the strength of their conviction.

And we have St. Paul. In some ways his testimony is disappointingly vague, and in some particulars he was perhaps mistaken, but as to the fact that he and all the leaders of the Church believed absolutely in the continued personal existence of Jesus, and that they founded their conviction on the evidence of their own senses, St. Paul's testimony is decisive. If any fact in ancient history is well attested, it is this, that the disciples of Jesus of Nazareth, though not anticipating any unusual experiences, came to believe that they had seen the Lord alive after his crucifixion and burial. Of course, if the sceptic is credulous enough to believe that the followers of Jesus were individually and collectively misled by the evidence of their senses, there is no room for further argument. If he can imagine that they were all the victims of hallucination, that in every case the vision which they thought they saw was a chance result of some physiological or psychological disturbance, and that nothing lay behind it but a childish delusion, then we must leave him to the enjoyment of his opinion. But let him not charge the simplest Christian with credulity. What miracle could compare with that? We can imagine how this or that detail came to be added to a narrative; we can imagine that stories grew up which had no foundation in fact; we can imagine wrong interpretations put upon the early record of events; but we cannot imagine a mistake so colossal as to gather the scattered disciples together and to establish among them a conviction in the strength of which they changed not only the course of their own lives, but also the history

of the world. They were convinced that they had seen Jesus alive, and the only rational explanation of their conviction is that they were right.

That being so, it is clear that the discussion which follows is of secondary importance. It would be untrue to say that the manner of the appearance of the Lord is a question devoid of historical interest, or even to assert that the gospel narratives are evidentially unimportant, but the fact of the resurrection is not guaranteed only by them. Even if they all proved to be legendary, the evidence for the central fact would not be destroyed. The uncertainty which surrounds them individually does not affect the truth to which collectively they bear witness.

Nevertheless, we would fain know what claim they may have to be considered historical, if only that we may satisfy a natural curiosity as to the most important period in the history of the world. At the risk of some repetition we must endeavour briefly to reconstruct with the materials at our disposal the history of the days following the crucifixion, only repeating by way of preface that we can only hope to establish certain probabilities, and that anything in the nature of dogmatic assertion is wholly out of place. On many points there will always be room for differences of opinion.

The Lord died upon the Cross some hours before the Jewish sabbath began at six o'clock on Friday evening. Jewish custom rendered it desirable that the body should be disposed of without delay, and a fortunate circumstance rendered it an easy matter. Joseph of Arimathæa, a man of position and a member of the Sanhedrim, was willing to make application to Pilate and arrange for the burial. Whether he was 'a disciple' in the full sense of the term we cannot say; Mark and Luke seem ignorant of any

such tradition, and possibly 'Peter' is nearer the truth when he calls him 'the friend of Jesus'; but the impression we gain from the earliest narratives is that he was more than the agent of the Sanhedrim. If, as Mark says, he bought linen and treated the body of Jesus with such respect as time allowed, he must have had more than a Jew's anxiety to dispose of a corpse before the sabbath began.

The same interpretation is suggested by the choice of a tomb. Rock-hewn sepulchres must have cost labour to make and were therefore comparatively expensive; a mere emissary of the Sanhedrim would surely have found a cheaper way of effecting the burial.

We do not know by what right Joseph made use of one of these sepulchres. Matthew says that it was his own property, and in the absence of any other explanation we may provisionally accept Matthew's statement, although it is strange that the other gospels say nothing of his ownership. More important is its location. 'Peter' and John reproduce a tradition that the tomb was in a private garden near by; to this tradition not very much weight can be attached, for the earlier gospels are silent and it is very easy to see why such a belief would tend to grow up. If angels were to come down from heaven and if the Lord himself was to appear, the place must have been retired and screened from the vulgar gaze. Archæologists have discovered a large number of rock-hewn tombs close together near Jerusalem, but isolated tombs also exist.[1] We can only say that the Johannine statement may be historical, but it would probably have been made in any case, and the silence of the synoptists is an argument against its acceptance.

Matthew, Luke, and John emphasize the fact that the

[1] See Appendix, Jewish Rock Tombs.

tomb was new and that the *loculi* were hitherto unoccupied. Nothing can be urged against this statement except the silence of Mark and the certainty that such a belief would soon become current whether founded on fact or not.

Of the manner of the burial little need be said. John's account of an elaborate embalming is almost certainly to be rejected, for it is quite inconsistent with the picture presented by Mark and Luke, and it can easily be explained as due to the belief that Joseph was a disciple. 'Peter,' who says that he washed the Lord and wound him in linen, is nearer to Mark and doubtless nearer to history. There was need for haste, but the washing of the Lord's wounds would seem a natural action. Certain women stood or sat near the tomb, observing both the location of the sepulchre and the defective manner of the burial. How near they came we cannot say; certainly near enough to see that Joseph had not used aromatic spices; but they would hardly be likely to peer into the sepulchre as Luke suggests.[1] The tomb was immediately closed with a stone.

The story of the guard we may safely dismiss; it is intrinsically improbable, and wholly irreconcilable with the accounts of Mark and Luke. During the sabbath the women made their plans: from their own resources they would supply that service which Joseph in his haste had neglected. Luke, misunderstanding or forgetting the Jewish method of reckoning time, describes the women as making their preparations on the Friday evening. Mark is more likely to be right in his assertion that the women bought their spices on Saturday evening so as to have everything ready for a secret visit to the tomb on Sunday morning.

[1] Luke xxiii. 55. 'They saw the tomb, and how the body was laid.'

About sunrise they came laden with the things which they had prepared. We may be sure that the women did not intend to arrive at the tomb before there was light enough for them to do their work, or after such a time as they could reasonably expect to work without interruption. They would aim at the hour of sunrise, but, burdened with their spices, they would start in good time, and they may have arrived earlier than they intended, when it was only just beginning to get light.

They came to what they believed to be the tomb in which the body of Jesus had been laid, and there they saw a young man near the mouth of the tomb. All the gospels say that they also found the stone rolled away. A single word in Mark (γάρ) provides a slight indication that this statement was not contained in the very earliest tradition, which only mentioned the presence of the young man ; but no emphasis can be laid on this point.

Did the women come to the right tomb? It is a question which can never be answered with assurance. If the tomb was a solitary sepulchre in a private garden a mistake is hardly conceivable, but if, as seems more likely, the tomb was one of many close together in the side of some rocky cliff, and if the women were in a distressed and excited state, a mistake would be easily made. The women had seen the burial two days before in broad daylight, but the district was unfamiliar to Galileans and in the dim twilight a wrong identification would not be impossible.

Mark implies that they were surprised to see the stone moved, but before they had time to investigate their astonishment was turned to fear and confusion by the realization that a young man was standing by and observing their movements. It was the very thing they had wished to avoid. Who was this young man? He might report

to the priests their sympathy with the crucified Nazarene, he might even be a guard set to prevent interference with the tomb [1]; in any case the work they had come to do was impossible in his presence. We must picture the circumstances, the faint light, the unfamiliar and eerie surroundings, the secret errand thus unexpectedly disclosed. Surely Mark is right when he says that they were amazed, adding that trembling and distraction had seized them. What else could be expected after days of nervous strain, sorrow, and excitement? But they did not run away immediately. They just had time to catch a few words which the young man uttered. Mark reports him as saying, 'Be not amazed. Ye seek Jesus the Nazarene who hath been crucified; he is risen, he is not here. Behold the place where they laid him.' The words are very important, and we must consider what grounds we have for supposing that they are accurately reported.

It is very improbable that the frightened women would remember the exact words which the young man used, and even if his words were clearly imprinted on their memory, would Mark, writing forty years later, record them with no verbal alteration? If on other grounds we see reason to believe that Mark's version is inaccurate, we cannot be surprised that inaccuracies have crept in; only a miracle could have preserved the original words to the women unchanged. Interest centres on the verb ἠγέρθη. If that is omitted, the words mean no more than that the women had made a mistake, and that the young man was kindly disposed to put them right. In view of the women's subsequent action in saying no word to their friends about the resurrection, it seems more

[1] Is this the origin of the story of the guard?

than probable that ἠγέρθη had no place in the original report of the interview. It may be objected that we have no right to suggest emendations for which there is no textual evidence. But it is not a question of what Mark wrote, the question concerns the earliest report of the women as to what the young man said. It seems almost certain that before the gospel was written this word (ἠγέρθη) had crept into the traditional account of the young man's words.

Equally strong is the objection to the historicity of the following sentence: 'But go tell his disciples and Peter that he goeth before you into Galilee; there ye shall see him, as he said unto you.' Apart from the fact that the women were hardly in a condition to remember so long a speech, the injunction is plainly inconsistent with the next verse: 'And they went out and fled from the tomb, for trembling and distraction had seized them, and they said nothing to any man for they feared—' It has already been argued that this must represent a genuine reminiscence, for it could never have been invented, and it is obviously inconsistent with a belief that the young man had announced the resurrection and entrusted the women with a message to the disciples. The women were afraid of the young man; there was nothing in his words to frighten them; if he had spoken as Mark reports, their fear would have been turned into joy.

The Gospel of Peter greatly strengthens the case against ἠγέρθη and the following message to the disciples. 'Peter' includes an announcement of the resurrection in his account of the young man's conversation, but he has no message to the disciples, and he represents them as still mourning over the death of Jesus five days later. His account as it stands is impossible, for it is incredible that any women, possessed of the greatest news ever entrusted to a human

being, would keep silence for a week. Either they spoke, as the other gospels assert, or they did not know the good tidings. The latter alternative is preferable, and ἠγέρθη must be rejected accordingly. It is perfectly easy to account for its place in the text by later interpretations of the women's experience; it is not possible to explain the women's silence recorded by Mark and implied by 'Peter' if the word had its place in the original tradition.

So we are led to this interpretation of the women's adventure. They came to the wrong place and mistook an empty tomb for the one they were seeking. A young man of whose identity we know nothing sought to correct their mistake, pointing to another tomb as 'the place where they laid him.' Terrified at the unexpected apparition and covered with confusion at the failure of their plan, the women ran away, dropping their spices at the door of the tomb ('Peter'). They told not a word of their adventure to any man.

When once a belief in the resurrection had been established, how quickly such a story would be interpreted and expanded! We have only to read the gospels to see with what result. The young man became an angel, or a little later two angels. His function was not only to announce the resurrection, but to assist in its accomplishment. His question, 'Do ye seek Jesus the Nazarene?' lost its interrogative force, or became a rebuke, 'Why seek ye the living among the dead?' His advice, 'See there the place where they laid him' became an invitation to inspect the empty tomb. A message to the disciples was soon added; at first it was a command to meet Jesus in Galilee, but in the gospels which embody the Jerusalem tradition it gave place to a mere statement that the women told all these things to the eleven. The mention of the women's silence was

omitted, and their fear was variously interpreted. In Matthew the women run away with fear and great joy; in Luke they are filled with awe in the presence of the angels, before whom they bend their heads; in John, Mary is troubled at the loss of the Lord's body. How different is the general impression created by these later narratives! The supernatural element is greatly strengthened; the emptiness of the tomb is the central feature, and not the young man's speech, or the removal of the stone, or even the inability of the women to find the body of the Lord; and the whole incident, originally a distressing adventure for the seekers, becomes the occasion of a triumphant announcement that the Lord has risen from the dead.

Little need be added to what has already been written concerning the events which followed. There is nothing to relate of the next few days. We must accept Mark's statement that the women kept silence because we can imagine no reason why it should have been invented, while there are obvious reasons why it should have been forgotten. On the same principle we believe the Gospel of Peter that the disciples remained in hiding in Jerusalem until the end of the feast. Then they went to their homes, the greater number returning to Galilee, where the first manifestation of the risen Jesus took place.

There is no reason to doubt that the story of John xxi., supported as it is by 'Peter,' gives a fairly correct account of the event. Some of the disciples were fishing, and as they came to land after a night of labour they saw a Figure on the beach. Peter, perhaps at the suggestion of another, recognized the Lord, and, too impetuous to wait for the boat to be brought to land, jumped into the water and waded ashore. We have no description of the interview—even John does not tell us

of the meeting—and indeed the first words which passed between the risen Master and the faithful friend who had denied him are best left to the imagination. The conversation recorded in John xxi. 15 ff. perhaps followed when the other disciples had brought their boat to land. It is admirably suited to the occasion of Peter's restoration: three times Peter had denied, three times he was asked to affirm his devotion, and the care of the flock was entrusted to him. Surely this was the origin of Paul's 'He appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve.'

Was there a meal? John's account may be historical, or it may be a version of the meal at Emmaus. The question is not very important. There is strong reason for believing that at some time the risen Lord presided over a meal with his disciples. The fact introduces us to a fascinating field for speculation. Was this the real origin of the eucharist?[1] Or may we believe that such sacramental meals were a regular feature in the life of the Lord and his disciples, and that this was chosen as the best way of convincing them that the old bond was still unbroken? Did bread and fish take the place here and on other occasions of bread and wine? These are interesting questions, but this is not the place in which to discuss them. It is remarkable that the fourth gospel never describes the manner in which the risen Jesus parted from the disciples; we must take Luke's ἄφαντος ἐγένετο ἀπ' αὐτῶν (xxiv. 31) as the most accurate description which the disciples were able to give.

1 Cor. xv. implies that St. Paul knew traditions of several other appearances. The manifestation by the lake might cover 'he was seen of Cephas, then of the

[1] It will be remembered that the fourth gospel omits the institution of the eucharist at the Last Supper, but if ch. xxi. is by another hand no stress can be laid on this consideration.

twelve,' though not all the twelve would be fishing. Of the appearances to the five hundred and to James we know nothing, and it is hard to believe in the historicity of the former; but the appearance 'to all the apostles' may fairly be identified with the farewell meeting on a mountain in Galilee, described by Matthew and transferred to Jerusalem by Luke and John. It was then that Jesus, having perhaps, and indeed probably, appointed a definite place in which the twelve were to meet him, gave them his farewell charge and, to borrow Luke's earlier phrase, 'was parted from them.' Opinions may differ as to the historical value of the tradition that Jesus gave the Church a world-wide mission, but there seems no reason to reject a belief which the variety of its forms proves to have been widely held. Subsequent history implies that some such charge was given. Very shortly afterwards the disciples were together in Jerusalem engaged in the organization of a society and preaching to men of many races and tongues. It looks as though they were under orders.

The story of the ascension as it is contained in Acts seems to have small claim to be considered historical. Matthew did not know any such tradition, neither did Luke himself when he wrote the gospel. John is silent, although conceivably his gospel may once have contained an account. It is easy to explain the genesis of the tradition without supposing that it had any historical foundation. Jesus, so the Church believed, was a divine Being living in Heaven. Heaven was a place up in the skies. Jesus had been on earth and was now in Heaven. Therefore he must have 'ascended.' The wonder is that the legend, if legend it be, took so long to grow.

We know little more. 1 Cor. xv. warns us that at an early date other stories were current, which for some

reason have left no trace in the gospels. Some probably took place in Judæa, but there seems little evidence that Jesus appeared to the disciples as a body before their journey to Galilee or after their return to Jerusalem. The final meeting was upon a mountain in Galilee, and after that they understood that they would see his bodily form no more. Details may be cautiously filled in by reference to the third and fourth gospels. His greeting was 'Peace be unto you.' He satisfied any doubts they may have felt as to his identity. Perhaps he explained that his death and resurrection might have been anticipated from a study of the Scriptures. Almost certainly he promised to his followers future help. But we have no first-hand account of these interviews, and tradition is vague. We can be absolutely certain that Jesus appeared once; we can be almost equally certain that he appeared twice to his disciples; the evidence is strong that he was seen on other occasions by individuals—by James, and the two at Emmaus. But for a first-hand account of his appearance, for a reliable record of his words, we shall search the ancient writings in vain. These are facts beyond our ken.

It does not matter very much. The Christian faith requires the assurance that Jesus lived after death, and that assurance a critical examination of the documents surely provides. Of the details of his risen life we know next to nothing. But why should we desire knowledge which the limitations of our earthly existence probably render us incapable of assimilating? In early days imagination filled the picture, and many of its assumptions were mistaken; it is one of the happy results of criticism that it has delivered us from the necessity of associating faith in the continued personal life of Jesus, which is all we need, with a difficult conception

of a resuscitated body for which the universe has no place save in a local material heaven. Before criticism winnowed the chaff from the grain 'the resurrection' had to be either accepted or denied. The believer stood committed to the acceptance of a material heaven up in the skies, unless he resorted to the pitiful expedient of a theory that during 'the forty days' the body of flesh and bones was gradually transmuted into something spiritual and immaterial. Now he has no such embarrassments. Relying on the evidence of the New Testament, he can believe in Jesus as a living Saviour while rejecting the early inference that his body was raised from the tomb; he can believe in 'the resurrection' on the same evidence which convinced the earliest disciples; he can obey the commands of the risen Lord to preach forgiveness in his name, and he can trust his promise of continued help to those who serve him. And yet he is not faced with the intractable problem, 'What became of the risen body?' He is not required to believe a stupendous miracle on evidence which would receive scant consideration in a court of law. He is not compelled to trifle with the God-given faculty of judgement, or to range himself among those who can believe anything on any evidence if the conviction harmonizes with their emotions and desires. Long ago it was recognized that the criticism of the Old Testament had rendered a great service to the Church; the time will come when it will be realized that in the sphere of the New Testament the Church's debt to the critics is certainly no less.

If Christianity claims to be a historical religion, then the Church has no choice but to submit its credentials to examination by the ordinary standards of historical criticism. It is disastrous to allow the impression to gain currency that the essentials of faith are bound up

with the acceptance of historical legends and crude unscientific myths. The Church has nothing to lose by an appeal to history, but it must be a candid appeal conducted by such methods as are recognized and respected in other fields of research. If there are flaws in the evidence, they must not be concealed; if there are uncertainties, they must be frankly admitted; if the probability is established that certain stories have resulted from the growth of tradition stimulated by pious imagination and dogmatic conviction, such stories must no longer be presented to the world as historical narratives of actual occurrences. Nothing is gained by a policy of make-believe, and much may be lost. If the world can be convinced that the Church only presents as certainties facts which can be defended at the bar of reason, and that when there is room for doubt the Church is ready to admit uncertainty, a respect for the Church and its message will be born in circles where at present it is conspicuously absent. We may regard the resurrection of Jesus as a fact which is supported by the verdict of the most rigorous criticism; but the force of the historical argument has been greatly weakened by the attempt to defend as history what a candid examination must pronounce to be legend, and by a persistent confusion between the fact itself and the stories to which it gave rise in an unscientific and uncritical age.

It cannot be too strongly urged that the outlook of educated men and women to-day is wholly different from the outlook of the early followers of Christ. They for the most part identified personal survival with bodily life; we have arrived at the conviction that if spiritual life is real at all, its association with bodily existence must be merely temporary. They thought of the universe (to use a modern term) as a small world in three storeys;

we are familiar with the wonders of astronomy. They believed that this earth was the chief and almost the sole concern of its Creator; we lay claim to a much more humble place in the infinite scheme of things. They had no doubt that the drama of life was to be played out to the end in the known world with Jerusalem at its centre; we have long since learnt to leave times and seasons and their issue to the wisdom of the Father. When all these and many other changes in the mentality of the modern world are considered, it may be realized how unlikely it is that the early Church would express its faith in the resurrection in terms acceptable to the modern mind. There are few things which can be believed always, everywhere, and by all, and no generation has a right to shirk its intellectual responsibilities by taking over from a different age a theology ready-made. The old wine must be poured into new bottles. In the providence of God we have been made the recipients of a new revelation mediated by the scientist and the historian; if we shrink from the task of co-ordinating this new knowledge with the faith handed down from the past, we are shirking the responsibilities which God has laid upon us, and misrepresenting a blind and prejudiced conservatism as loyalty to truth.

The only loyalty worth having is loyalty to a person. Loyalty to opinions, however ancient, is only prejudice by another name, and even loyalty to an institution may be no more than bigotry writ large. Loyalty to God and loyalty to Christ are the unmistakable marks of the Christian spirit, and they are not effaced by a readiness to re-examine evidences, to acknowledge facts, to rebuild theologies. Rather are these traits the true manifestations of loyalty to the God of Truth.

The Christian theologian may have to move far from

his traditional position; how far we cannot say as yet, but no farther than the astronomer and the biologist have moved in the last five hundred years. We need not be disturbed. A theology which is out of touch with modern thought and offensive to modern feeling is a theology which handicaps the religion which it ought to help. Now, as always, a true theology must be conceived in the spirit and expressed in the language of the best thought of the age, and only that theology which conforms to the noblest ideals of the time is worthy to provide the medium through which the Christian faith is presented to the world. This present age has many faults, but one virtue it possesses in a pre-eminent degree, and that is loyalty to truth. In the search for truth the Church has too often appeared as an unwilling follower, whereas its place is surely in the van.

The body of Jesus may never have moved from its shelf in the rock-hewn tomb. We do not know, and we shall never know the certainty of that mysterious morning. But the Spirit of Jesus is with us yet, not in a vague respect for all that he lived and died for, but in the personal presence of Him whom we love and serve. 'Lo, I am with you all the days!'

APPENDIX

JEWISH ROCK TOMBS

DESIRING precise information as to Jewish methods of burial in the first century, the author submitted a number of questions to Professor R. A. S. Macalister, F.S.A., who for many years was in charge of operations in connection with the Palestine Exploration Fund. Professor Macalister has kindly consented to the publication of the questions with his answers.

Q. 1. Was the method of burial in cave-sepulchres universal or reserved only for the rich ?

A. Probably burial in *artificial* caves was reserved only for the rich : the cost of hollowing out tombs would be prohibitive to the poor. It is possible, though improbable, that some large sepulchres had been provided for poor burials at the charges of the public or of the charitable. We have no means of ascertaining the proportion of burials in artificial caves in relation to the total number of burials.

Q. 2. What, then, was done with the bodies of the poor ?

A. We do not clearly know. Probably many were simply buried in the ground (cf. the Potter's Field, purchased to bury strangers in). *Natural* caves also were very probably used.

Q. 3. Have any considerable number of rock-hewn tombs been discovered ?

A. Yes, very large numbers round every centre of population. Most of them have long been rifled and now stand empty.

Q. 4. Are they close together, close enough to make the identification of a particular tomb a matter of some difficulty ?

A. Yes, closely packed, especially near Jerusalem and

other large centres of population. It is hardly an exaggeration to apply the conventional adjective 'honeycombed' to the sides of the valleys near Jerusalem. Inscriptions are almost wholly lacking.

Q. 5. Have any private *mausolea* been discovered, e.g. a single isolated tomb in what may have been a 'garden'?

A. Most of the rock-cut tombs are in a sense private *mausolea*, each being the property of a family. As they are scattered about everywhere, they must of necessity have been situated in many cases in land which was also private property, presumably the property of the family which owned the tomb.

It often happens that an isolated rock or rock scarp has had a tomb chamber quarried in it. This may well have stood in such a garden as is mentioned in connection with Joseph's tomb.

Q. 6. How many bodies were usually placed in one cave-tomb?

A. There is no rule. A very common plan for a tomb-chamber has nine shaft-tombs running horizontally into the walls of the chamber, three in each wall, excluding the wall which contains the entrance. But this by no means implies that there were only nine interments in the tomb; for, when a body was decayed, its bones were collected and placed in a small limestone coffer (commonly called an ossuary) just large enough to hold the long bones without breaking, and the other bones were closely packed in with them. The name of the owner of the bones was usually, though not always, scratched on the lid or side of the coffer, and the shaft-grave was used for a new interment. Sometimes dozens of these coffers may be found piled up on the floor of the chamber. Clearly it would have been impossible to provide rock-cut accommodation for all the members of a family extending over several generations, no purse would be equal to the expense of quarrying involved. This device met the difficulty, and it explains to some extent the absence of inscriptions in Palestinian rock-cut tombs (contrast those of Egypt in this respect). The graves were not permanent resting-places for the dead, and therefore could not be labelled as such by inscription.

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